

Christopher due in Mideast in June

TEL AVIV (AP) — U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher will visit the Middle East later this month in a fresh effort to break the stalemate in the Israeli-Syrian peace talks, Israel Radio said Saturday. A government official confirmed that Mr. Christopher would arrive in Israel on June 22 and stay for two days. The official, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said he did not have details on the remainder of Mr. Christopher's itinerary in the Middle East. In his last trip to the region in early May, Mr. Christopher was unable to end the Israeli-Syrian deadlock. At the time, he delivered to Syrian President Hafez Al Assad an Israeli proposal for withdrawal over several years from the Golan Heights. The Israeli plan did not include a pledge to withdraw from all of the Golan, as Mr. Assad demanded. Uri Dromi, head of Israel's government press office, said Israel welcomed Mr. Christopher's efforts. "Since his involvement in the talks is crucial, we hope it will generate some movement forward," Mr. Dromi told the Associated Press.

Jordan Times

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جوردان تايمز صحيفة سياسية مستقلة في الأردن

Regent chairs Cabinet meeting

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, Saturday chaired a Cabinet meeting to review domestic, regional and international developments. Talking to reporters later, the Regent expressed hope that Jordan's achievements and stands would not be underestimated by any party aiming to undermine national unity and security under the pretext of democracy. Prince Hassan said as an example some tried to label the issue of Jerusalem and the "holy authority" over the city as a vague Jordanian initiative, stressing that it is a clear Arab and Islamic initiative. In reference to the recent Jordanian-Israeli meetings, Prince Hassan said a great achievement was made towards recognising Jordanian sovereignty in drawing borders between the Kingdom and Israel, and added that this issue is clear, internationally recognised and does not affect issues of substance. Noting that the international community and various world bodies have for years tried to reduce the importance of the Palestinian refugee problem, he said the Jordanian agenda for the bilateral and multilateral Mideast peace talks highlight the issue.

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Israel eases some curbs on entry

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (R) — Israel's Itim news agency said Saturday that Police Minister Moshe Shahal had announced that Palestinian women, regardless of age, and youths up to 16 years could enter Israel and occupied Jerusalem without restriction. The move eased an entry ban imposed on Palestinians from the West Bank and Gaza Strip after the bombing of a bus in Israel in April in which eight people were killed. The government had earlier made some exception for a limited number of workers and for humanitarian reasons. Mr. Shahal was quoted by Itim as saying of the easing of the measure: "I hope that we will be able to come to normal life and it also depends on the Palestinian side." About 70,000 Palestinians worked in Israel, most at menial jobs, before the closure. Palestinians, aside from losing livelihoods, are cut off from occupied Jerusalem, their spiritual and cultural centre, by the entry ban.

Sudan recaptures rebel capital

KHARTOUM (AFP) — Government forces recaptured Saturday the administrative capital of the rebel Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA), military authorities said here. The town of Kajo Kaji in the southern state of Eastern Equatoria was captured Saturday morning, the general command of the Sudanese armed forces said in a statement, adding that the rebels "had been driven out." The town became the SPLA's administrative headquarters in 1992 after the fall of its one-time stronghold of Forit, the statement said. Kajo Kaji had been in the hands of the SPLA since 1989. There was no immediate confirmation from rebel sources that the town had fallen.

Blast in Mexico town kills 5

GUADALAJARA, Mexico (AP) — A car-bomb exploded outside a luxury hotel in this central Mexican city early Saturday, killing at least five people and wounding 15 others, officials said. Police sources said the bombing may have been linked to a dispute between rival drug gangs. There were no immediate claims of responsibility. Guadalajara, about 280 kilometres northwest of Mexico City, has been the scene of drug-related violence. The car blew up around 2:30 a.m. (0830 GMT) outside the Camino Real Hotel, where 300 guests were winding up a coming out party for a 15-year-old girl in a hotel ballroom. Investigators at the scene said the girl's family is known to have links with drug traffickers.

N. Korea denies Aden arms deal

TOKYO (AFP) — North Korea on Saturday denied it had entered into an arms deal with secessionists in southern Yemen, the Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) said in a dispatch monitored here. "This is utter... fabrication," a North Korean Foreign Ministry spokesman was quoted as saying by KCNA. The spokesman said some foreign news organisations were spreading reports that North Korea had signed an arms deal with southern Yemeni forces embroiled in a five-week civil war with northern government troops. "It is by no means accidental that such reports are afloat when the manoeuvres to stifle the DPRK (North Korea) over the fictitious nuclear issue have reached a grave stage," the official was quoted as saying. "We cannot but think that they are underlain by the political intention to impair the authority of the DPRK and isolate it in the international arena," the spokesman told KCNA.

Yemeni battle resumes after a brief truce

INTENSE ARTILLERY and tank fire lashed out near the secessionist stronghold of Aden on Saturday, shattering a 12-hour lull on the main battlefield of Yemen's civil war. Workers crouched and hugged each other in terror in shops and offices on the outskirts of the refugee-crowded city as shellfire boomed from villages 15 kilometres to the north. The blasts shook buildings and rattled windows in the beleaguered port city, where shelling has already cut water and electricity.

Both sides accused the other of breaking the latest attempt at a ceasefire in the five-week war.

A southern military statement said northern forces had launched "desperate attacks" to advance on Aden and were shelling residential areas on the outskirts. In the northern capital Sanaa, Planning Minister Abdul Karim Iryani said the southern forces had attacked northern troops.

Mr. Iryani, a close confidant of President Ali Abdullah Saleh, told reporters that the northern leadership had "substantial evidence of unlimited supplies" of arms and financial aid being channelled to the southern leadership by Saudis from Eastern Europe.

"We see Saudi Arabia as party to the conflict," Mr.

Iryani said. Riyadh lobbied hard for the adoption of a U.N. Security Council resolution on June 1 calling for an immediate ceasefire and sending U.N. special envoy Lakhdar Brahimi on a fact-finding mission to Yemen. It has strongly denied northern accusations of supporting the south. But Riyadh's relations with Mr. Saleh have been strained since Yemen backed the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in 1990. Mr. Iryani was in Saudi Arabia on Saturday after talks with President Saleh in Sanaa. He told Reuters he would travel to southern Yemen, probably the eastern port of Mukalla, to meet southern leaders in the next day or two.

"This is a serious matter. Lives are being lost," he said. The south appealed to the U.N. Security Council to send international observers immediately to enforce a ceasefire.

The northern government has rejected suggestions that observers monitor a truce. The south in turn rejected Sanaa's proposal that a committee of officers from both armies enforce it.

The south threatened Saturday to hit back at water and power plants in northern Yemen after attacks left Aden facing water shortages and electricity cuts.

"We do not accept that our people stay without water, electricity, and the port. We have our own means to hit back," said Seif Sael, a politburo member of the ruling Yemen Socialist Party (YSP). There have been sporadic electricity cuts since northern shells hit the city's power station on Friday, and Aden's 500,000 residents have been without running water since the pumping station was damaged a week ago.

Mr. Sael said the damage to the power station was minor but that two extra generators had been turned on while repairs were being made.

Northern warplanes have also attacked the south's sole refinery in Little Aden, destroying several oil storage tanks last Sunday and trying to hit the facility again on Saturday.

But any southern retaliation would be aimed at economic targets and not the people," Mr. Sael added.

War broke out on May 5 between forces loyal to President Ali Saleh and those of his southern rival and Vice-President Ali Salem Al Beidh.

Three truces have collapsed since the first came into force at midnight, on Monday, with no independent military assessment available of who fired the first shots.

Israeli troops kill Ramallah woman

RAMALLAH, occupied West Bank (Agencies) — Israeli soldiers shot and killed a Palestinian woman on Saturday and wounded four youngsters when they fired on protesters in Ramallah on the Israeli-occupied West Bank, Palestinian sources said.

She died shortly after being admitted to Ramallah hospital, a hospital source said.

The four youngsters were only slightly wounded. The number of Palestinians killed since the start of the intifada in December 1987 has now reached 1,275 according to an AFP toll compiled from Palestinian sources.

Ramallah has been the site of frequent clashes between stone throwers and Israeli troops. The city is in a part of the West Bank that remains under Israeli occupation and is also a stronghold of Palestinian factions opposed to the Israel-Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) autonomy accord.

On June 1, fourteen Palestinians were wounded by army gunfire when violence erupted in the city in protest over the deaths of two Palestinians who were killed in an ambush by undercover troops a day earlier.

South of Ramallah, about

200 members of the Palestine People's Party (PPP), formerly the Palestine Communist Party, and dozens of Israeli pacifists from the Gush Shalom movement, demonstrated at the entrance to Jerusalem.

They were protesting against Israel's "annexation" of East Jerusalem, seized in the 1967 Middle East war and later declared the "eternal" capital of the Jewish state. The demonstrators called for Jerusalem to become the capital of "two states," with the east the capital of a future Palestinian state and the west the capital of Israel.

Israel's housing minister said Saturday the Jewish state should build houses for Jews all across Jerusalem to ensure the Holy City could not be returned to the Arabs.

Binyamin Ben-Eliezer, rebutting right-wing accusations that the government would concede rule over parts of Jerusalem, told army radio: "Every effort must be made to save the talk and to do much in Jerusalem, that is, to determine de facto (Israeli control) with a massive building programme in all areas of Jerusalem — and I am talking at the moment of the part where the majority are Arabs."

Israel and the PLO have sparred over Jerusalem, up for negotiation when final settlement talks open in two years, since implementing the interim peace deal in Gaza and Jericho in May.

Pyongyang 'relaxed'

BEIJING (Agencies) — North Korea's leaders remain relaxed about the growing threat of international sanctions in the belief that their ally China will not let them down, a U.S. expert said here Saturday on arrival from Pyongyang.

Selig Harrison, senior associate of the Washington-based Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, said there was little concern in the North Korean capital over Pyongyang's refusal to allow international inspectors access to its suspect nuclear facilities. "They're not worried about sanctions. They don't think they're coming. They don't think there is much that can be done to them that hasn't already been done because they are already under sanctions," in place since the Korean war, said Mr. Harrison, who met President Kim Il-Sung for three hours on Thursday.

"I think they have reason to believe that they are not going to be let down by China," said Mr. Harrison, in Pyongyang for about a week in his capacity as the director of the Carnegie Endowment's project on Northeast Asian security.

China, which has veto rights as a permanent member of the U.N. Security Council, has consistently maintained its opposition to imposing sanctions against its communist ally.

Mr. Harrison's comments came as international support grew for U.S. calls for the imposition of U.N. sanctions against North Korea.



His Majesty King Hussein Saturday is seen off at Marka Airport on his way to London en route to the United States by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, His Royal Highness Prince Abdullah and Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali (Petra photo)

King heads for London en route to U.S. for check-up, Clinton talks

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Majesty King Hussein left for London on Saturday en route to the United States for a routine postoperative medical checkup and a meeting with U.S. President Bill Clinton.

Officials said the Monarch will spend a few days in Britain before flying to Rochester, Minnesota, for his biannual tests.

The Jordan News Agency, Petra, said King Hussein, who will be joined on the U.S. visit later by Her Majesty Queen Noor, was to spend several days in the United States during which he will hold talks with President Bill Clinton on regional and international issues with particular

attention to Jordanian-U.S. relations and the Middle East peace process.

Jordan Television quoted the King's private physician, Dr. Samir Farraj, as saying King Hussein was in good health. The physician said that following this session of check-ups, the King will be undergoing routine checks once a year.

In August 1992, King Hussein underwent a cancer surgery at the Mayo Clinic.

Following the routine tests conducted during 1993, Dr. Farraj announced that the tests showed no trace of cancer.

King Hussein, 58, will meet with Mr. Clinton in Washington after the tests

which require him to spend two to three days in hospital, the officials said.

The White House meeting will focus on the 2½-year-old Middle East peace process.

In remarks to Jordan Television on the meeting, Information Minister Jawad Al Anani said the climate for such a summit "is far better than that which existed one or two years ago in the wake of the Gulf war."

"I believe that the U.S.-Jordanian relations will witness favourable developments that would be beneficial to Jordan's interests," the minister said. "We believe that the United States

(Continued on page 5)

Northern MPs unhappy over Cabinet make-up

By Ayman Al Safadi
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Representatives of parliamentary blocs Saturday shelved a proposal by some northern lawmakers to withhold confidence from the government out of concern not to rock the boat at a time when "Jordan is entering a very delicate and sensitive" era, parliamentary sources said.

The sources said the members of Parliament (MPs) agreed to postpone action on the proposal until His Majesty King Hussein returns from his "important meeting with U.S. President Bill Clinton" in Washington later this month.

In light of the sensitive developments on the political arena and the importance of His Majesty's visit to the U.S., the deputies decided to await the King's return home before further discussing the proposal, one source said.

The sources said the proposal to withhold confidence from the government was presented by mainly northern deputies who felt the government reshuffle on Thursday did not ensure fair representation of areas in the north.

The number of northern ministers did not change in the reshuffle, with five entering the Cabinet and five leaving it, but the northern deputies feel all of the new ministers came from a certain area in the north, the sources said. Hence, they believe the north was not fairly represented in the Cabinet, they said.

The majority of the 42 deputies who discussed the proposal in an informal meeting in the house also agreed to shelve it in light of the political considerations that necessitated the reshuffle, the sources said.

Officials have said the change was prompted by developments on the Jordanian track of the peace talks with Israel.

Another reason that led to the shelving of the proposal was that deputies did not want to look as if they were concerned with joining the Cabinet by forwarding the no-confidence bid right after the reshuffle, the sources said.

According to the sources, (Continued on page 5)

Syrian postponement of talks with Jordan seen to reflect discontentment

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The Syrian decision to "postpone" top-level talks with Jordan, which were due to begin in Amman Saturday, was prompted by Damascus' "unhappiness" with the outcome of talks the Kingdom held with Israel in Washington last week, informed sources said.

But a well-informed source downplayed the long-term impact of the current tension on Jordanian-Syrian relations.

He said His Majesty King Hussein and Syrian President Hafez Al Assad had established "new and solid foundations" for political relations and coordination between the two countries though this will "take time to translate into a trouble-free relationship."

Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Talal Al Hassan stressed, in announcing the Syrian decision to put off the meeting, the Kingdom's keen interest in maintaining strong ties with Syria.

"Jordan is keen on maintaining coordination at the highest level with Syria based on the deep strategic relations which bind the two countries," he said.

Sources said, however, that Syria felt uneasy about the outcome of last week's Jordanian-Israeli talks which led to a Jordanian-Israeli agreement to set up committees to discuss borders, water rights and economic development in the region next month, even though the Kingdom kept Damascus posted on developments on its track of the negotiations.

They added that Syria (Continued on page 5)

Jordan rejects hardline Palestinian criticism

By Ayman Al Safadi
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The government on Saturday categorically rejected accusations by Syrian-based hardline Palestinian groups that the outcome of talks the Kingdom held with Israel last week violated Arab coordination.

"Jordan did not violate Arab coordination and was the first to seek it," Minister of Information Jawad Al Anani told the Jordan Times.

Dr. Anani reiterated Jordan's belief in Arab solidarity and coordination, noting that the Kingdom was the country which asked for meetings of the foreign minister of the Arab parties to the peace negotiations before and after every round of the talks.

"These meetings stopped for reasons which Jor-

Jordan restates support for Yemen unity

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein on Saturday reiterated Jordan's support for Yemen's unity and its drive to establish democracy.

The King was speaking at a meeting with Yemeni envoy Abdullah Ghanem, who passed to the King a verbal message from Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh.

An official statement said that the message dealt with the current situation in Yemen and Yemen's appreciation of the Jordanian stand and keenness on safeguarding Yemeni unity.

Before the audience, which was attended by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, His Royal Highness Prince Abdullah, Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali and the Royal Court Chief Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker, the Yemeni envoy told a press conference that his visit to the Kingdom was part of a tour of a number of Arab countries where he intended to convey the Yemeni leadership's views regarding the ongoing conflict in Yemen.

Mr. Ghanem, who is Yemen's justice minister, said that a Yemeni delegation was touring Arab states in North Africa and another was holding meetings with the U.S. congress in Washington in efforts to convey Sanaa's views.

"The delegations are refuting claims and false reports that the war in Yemen was a conflict between the north and south and that Sanaa was trying to force the south to accept unity," Mr. Ghanem said.

(Continued on page 5)

Abu Alaa welcomes aid but says it is not enough

TUNIS (Agencies) — A senior Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) official said on Saturday immediate aid granted by international donors for start of self-government costs in the Gaza Strip and Jericho was an encouraging step but it was not enough.

International donors in Paris granted Palestinians \$42 million in immediate aid on Friday to pay their new police force, with a pledge of more cash soon.

The PLO has demanded an extra \$85 million to fully cover the self-rule government budget deficit.

"What was done is a positive and encouraging step and what we still demanded are other steps to secure (cover) of the deficit for 1994," Ahmad Qomria, also known as Abu Alaa, economy and trade "minister" in the self-rule government, said.

He also demanded that international donors start immediately make money pledged for the economic development of the West Bank and Gaza Strip available as part of their support for the peace deal signed last year between the PLO and Israel.

Asked whether this would now encourage PLO Chair-

man Yasser Arafat to return to Jericho, Abu Alaa told Reuters: "I don't believe he will be able to run the (self-rule government) affairs as long as he is not confident that funds for the monthly expenses are made available."

The World Bank has said the \$42 million immediate aid meant the new Palestinian National Authority was fully funded until the end of August.

Several countries promised to top up their contributions at another meeting in Paris on July 11, Abu Alaa said. He said the PLO welcomed

the donors' decision to deposit the money in a fund named after the late Norwegian Foreign Minister Johann Jorgen Holst, who brokered last year's landmark Israel-PLO accord. "It is a more flexible fund," Abu Alaa said.

He said he was also worried by the delay in implementing a pledge by donors of \$675 million for projects aimed at developing the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

The projects were scheduled to be implemented from last January, but were delayed by the signing of the

PLO-Israel self-rule agreement in May and the setting up of the Palestinian Economic Council for Reconstruction and Development (PEC-DAR), which was to channel the donors' aid.

Israeli radio stations said Saturday that Mr. Arafat would arrive in the autonomous West Bank town of Jericho within a week.

Both Israel Radio and Israeli army radio cited unidentified PLO officials in Tunis in their reports. Army radio said Mr. Arafat would arrive in Jericho next Friday

(Continued on page 5)

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Signs of flourishing business in Jericho

ISTANBUL — U.S. Secretary of State Christopher L. Wright said in a speech to the U.S. House of Representatives that the U.S. will support the peace process in the Middle East.

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JERICHO, West Bank (AFP) — From T-shirt vendors along the town's public square to owners of large five-star hotels, Palestinians from all over the occupied West Bank are starting to pour money into this autonomous region.

Foundations for a bank and a residential compound are being laid, at least three major hotels are coming up around the town, and a holding company has advertised shops for rent in a new wall.

Despite an abundance of historic sites, Jericho, a dusty oasis 250 metres below sea level, has barely a hotel to its name, let alone modern shopping facilities.

Most of the 15,000 residents are small farmers, and the construction and tourism sector has been typically run by Palestinians from Ramallah, Hebron and other parts of the occupied West Bank.

Khaled Mohammad, 18, left his job as a barber in Ramallah to start a business selling picture frames and T-shirts along Jericho's main square after self-rule was launched last month.

"I've been doing quite well here," said Mr. Mohammad, who together with a partner, also from Ramallah, makes \$20 a day profit.

He sells mainly to locals and visitors from the West Bank who come to experience what life here is like under Palestinian autonomy.

The larger investors are pinning their hopes on more foreign tourists coming in to see the ancient ruins and monasteries now there is a promise of stability.

"The Jericho residents don't have money, Jericho's economy was dead," said Rajai Ishaq Abdo, owner of Hisham Palace Hotel, one of the first in the region. It is now rented out to the Palestinian Broadcasting Corporation (PBC) after having been closed for virtually 10 years.

"Business has not been good, there was not enough tourism because of a lack of stability and the intifada."

"Also the Israeli authorities didn't help. They discouraged foreigners from staying here, and the tax pressure was too much for the business," he said, adding that he plans to renovate and expand his hotel.

Like Mr. Abdo, many investors are waiting, and hoping for new and better

Palestinian tax and investment regulations.

"We are building this hotel in stages," said Ziad Khalaf from Ramallah.

"It depends on the money available and the situation here whether we will have 27 rooms or 81," said Mr. Khalaf, who with his two brothers is converting a restaurant on Jericho's tourist route into a luxury hotel, complete with an Arab-style central courtyard and stores.

"We expect more facilities, and new (Palestinian) rules that will at least be easier than the Israeli tourism rules."

Mamoun Steih, in charge of public relations at the Palestinian development and rehabilitation council, was reassuring.

"The Palestinian economy is targeted for the open market, so we try to ease things for the private investors," he said, promising that under the new Palestinian laws, income tax and value-added tax would be lower than those imposed by Israel.

The awaited laws are to be passed after the arrival of the new "cabinet" in the Palestinian authority, headed by Yasser Arafat.

Mr. Steih said the World Bank had set aside \$30 million for the private sector. However, he stressed "our role is to make the infrastructure look better for investors."

Some \$6 to \$8 million need to be pumped into improving Jericho's infrastructure, to establish a proper sewage system, expand the region's telephone lines and electric grid.

But, much will depend on the Israeli army which controls checkpoints into Jericho.

Lieutenant Ibrahim Jadal, tourism liaison officer, said Palestinian and Israeli tour leaders have complained that the soldiers sometimes bar entry to tour buses, force them to take a longer route, or let them through "at their own risk."

"This scares tourists off. They imagine Jericho to be a volcano whereas it is very calm," Lt. Jadal said.

He had no statistics, but said on good days up to 60 buses still drive in.

Under the self-rule agreement, Israeli vehicles with non-West Bank licence plates can use a longer road bypassing Jericho town.

Mubarak's 'national dialogue' call fails to impress opposition

CAIRO (AP) — Facing violence by Islamic militants, President Hosni Mubarak wants political opponents to join a "national dialogue" on Egypt's many troubles.

Opposition parties, shunted aside for years, have insisted that plans for broadening Egypt's democracy must head the agenda. The government prefers to focus on political extremism.

Seven months after the invitations went out during Mr. Mubarak's campaign for a third six-year term, the only dialogue has been about who might participate in the talks.

"The government wants the dialogue to turn into a front against terrorism, while the other parties want to participate without feeling they are being used," said Osama Al Ghazali, a political analyst helping arrange the dialogue.

Indeed, some people believe the proposed dialogue says much about Egypt's immature democracy. In other countries, dialogue occurs among political parties in the parliament.

"Parties are supposed to compete," noted Hala Mustafa, an expert on Islamic extremism for the Al-Ahram Centre for Political Studies.

"The call for dialogue reflects the monolithic mentality that seeks consensus instead of diversity."

Frustrated by postponements, Mr. Mubarak appointed a 40-member committee in late May to prepare the agenda. It included leaders of 10 opposition parties, but the line-up was dominated by 26 members from Mr. Mubarak's ruling National Democratic Party (NDP).

Opposition parties were infuriated. The liberal Al-Wafd and the nationalist Arab Nasserites announced boycotts. Three other parties threatened to pull out unless the committee was redrawn.

In announcing his boycott, Foad Serageldin, Al-Wafd's venerable 86-year-old leader, said it was his impression "the National Democratic Party is having a dialogue with the National Democratic Party."

The dialogue, if it is held, would be closely watched beyond Egypt — a country viewed by the west as a moderate ally against extremism. Corruption and the lack of democratic traditions are root causes for the rise of radical groups in many Arab states, including Egypt and Algeria.



ALERT: A South Yemeni soldier keeps a look out on northern positions from a front-line position east of Aden on Saturday. Heavy artillery dials erupted and an air raid took place near the southern capital, shattering yet another ceasefire (see page one) (AFP photo)

Rabbi who calls for killing Arafat says he missed him once himself

TEL AVIV (AP) — The bearded, stooped rabbi says he nearly killed Yasser Arafat himself back in '68. Now he is raising a furor commanding Jews to carry out the assassination.

Rabbi Shlomo Goren's religious edict joins other controversial rulings that have come to characterise Israel's former chief rabbi and army general. Today he commands a small but militant following in a seminary in Jerusalem's Old City.

Last year he called on Israeli soldiers to disobey any orders to evacuate Jewish settlements, provoking the ire of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin who told him he was setting the stage for bloodshed in the army.

He also ruled that observant Jews should not heed laws passed by the parliament if they were not passed by a Jewish majority, a slap at the Arab members of parliament who help the ruling Labour Party keep an edge over the opposition.

Most Israelis dismiss Rabbi Goren's verbal attacks as bombast. But others see his opinions as dangerous because ardent followers take them as law. Legislators have urged police to open investigations against him, but so far they have all been dropped.

"I am prepared to sit in prison, write my books. I am not afraid of anything," Rabbi Goren said in an interview Thursday with the Associated Press.

Syrian assembly ends term

DAMASCUS (AP) — Syria's People's Assembly, or parliament, ended its four-year term Friday. Preparations began for new elections amid gradual moves towards liberalisation in a key Arab state.

Abdull Kader Kaddoura, speaker of the 250-seat assembly, said after the final session attended by Prime Minister Mahmoud Zoubi that voting among Syria's estimated 6.8 million-strong electorate will be held within 90 days.

President Hafez Al-Assad, 63, has been realigning towards the West following the 1991 collapse of the Soviet Union, his long time ally and benefactor.

Mr. Assad's regime, one of the most durable in the Middle East, is likely to continue this trend amid peace negotiations with Israel.

But despite economic liberalisation, which is fostering a new entrepreneurial class, major democratic reforms are expected any time soon.

Parliament's main function is to represent various groups, interests rather than serve as a decision-making body with wide legislative powers in Syria's highly centralised political system. It does approve government-sponsored legislation and the state budget.

The assembly was formed with 145 seats in 1971, a year after Mr. Assad, a member of the minority Muslim Alawite sect, took power in a bloodless coup.

It was initially appointed for a two-year term, with the first elections held in 1973.

The legislature was expanded from 195 to 250 members for the last elections in May 1990, when more than 9,000 candidates were fielded.

At the time, the official media said that was a move to encourage independents to run. But it primarily served to diversify the regime's base of support.

The ruling Baath Party, headed by Mr. Assad, won 134 seats in the last election.

The National Progressive Front, grouping the other five parties, holds 30 seats and is tightly controlled by the government.

The rest are allocated to independents. These include merchants, businessmen and professionals, mostly from the majority Sunni Muslim community.

The Baathists invariably win elections by a landslide. Mr. Assad himself, with a firm grip on power, has been widening his political base beyond the Baath in recent years.

But when he was reelected in December 1991 for a fourth seven-year term, with a 99.98 per cent landslide, he stressed that he saw no reason for democratic change in tandem with what was happening in Eastern Europe.

Afghan premier threatens fresh fighting in Kabul

JALALABAD (R) — Afghan Prime Minister Gulbuddin Hekmatyar on Friday threatened fresh battles in battered Kabul unless arch-foe President Burhanuddin Rabbani stepped down at the end of his term this month.

"If Rabbani does not step down, if they close all doors then the only solution will be war," Mr. Hekmatyar told a news conference in the eastern Afghan city of Jalalabad.

Mr. Hekmatyar's radical Hezb-e-Islami forces and their allies under ex-communist warlord General Abdul Rasid Dostum launched a fierce artillery and rocket offensive on Kabul on New Year's Day to try to topple Mr. Rabbani.

More than 1,500 people have been killed and thousands injured in the latest assault and the shattered city is rocked almost daily by new attacks.

"The ball is in their court," Mr. Hekmatyar said. "They will be responsible for any new war."

Mr. Rabbani's two-year term expires at the end of this month but neither the president nor the prime minister have been able to agree on a formula to take effect from July.

Mr. Hekmatyar repeated his demand for direct presidential elections followed by the formation of a parliament and cabinet based on the proportionate size of the parties emerging from the polls.

"I don't think the presence of arms would in any way hamper the holding of elections," he said. "Mr. Hekmatyar was visiting Jalalabad from his fortified headquarters at Charasyab, 25 kilometres south of Kabul, to address party members."

Mr. Rabbani insists he cannot step down unless a shura, a council, of leaders from across Afghanistan is held to decide the future government, warning of a dangerous vacuum of power there if he were to leave office.

Mr. Hekmatyar accused Mr. Rabbani of wanting to use such a council of hand-picked supporters to ensure his reelection.

"He wants to continue in office by convening a selected Shura," Mr. Hekmatyar said.

More than 11,500 people have been killed and much of the city reduced to ruins in bloody bursts of action fighting in Kabul since the guerrilla seized power from the former Soviet-installed government in April, 1992.

More than one-third of Kabul's 1.5 million residents have fled — many to Pakistan and others living in Makeshift refugee camps around Jalalabad on the main road to Pakistan.

Mr. Hekmatyar said he had grave misgivings about the aim of a U.N. peace mission led by Mehmed Mestiri, a special envoy of the secretary general, that has toured Afghanistan and visited neighbouring countries to try to find a solution to the more than two years of war in Kabul.

He said he would be opposed to any attempt by the United Nations or other countries to install a government of their choice in Afghanistan.

The United Nations says it is seeking only to gather opinions for a possible solution and to discuss these with Afghanistan's quarrelling leaders.

U.S., Israel to develop unmanned airborne missile system

WASHINGTON (AFP) — Israel and the United States are developing a radar-evading, unmanned airborne weapons system capable of shooting down Scud-type missiles in the critical seconds after launch, a report said Friday.

If successful, the system would bring two major advances to defence technology: The ability to destroy the missiles before they can spread multiple explosives and the ability to replace high-priced manned aircraft not suited to the mission, Aviation Week and Space Technology reported.

Three Israeli firms — Israel Aircraft Industries, Rafael, and Wael — have teamed to design the unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV).

Specifications call for the UAV to carry a new air-to-air missile that could intercept Scud-type, ground-launched missiles in the first 65 to 80 seconds after launch.

Scud missiles are capable of carrying as many as 100 small 2.2 — 4.5-kilogramme submunitions — explosive devices discharging chemical, biological or nuclear waste components.

Because Scuds release their submunitions at altitudes where ballistic missiles are still ascending, intercepting them is highly complicated and expensive.

The UAV project is part of an Israeli intercept study financed by the U.S. Ballistic Missile Defence Organisation (BMDO).

The study is due to be completed and reported to Congress in July, and is key to obtaining further U.S. and Israeli support, according to Pentagon and congressional sources cited by the report.

UAV development has bred controversy at the Defence Department and the U.S. Air Force. The argument centres over modifying UAVs or using manned aircraft to carry intercept missiles, to kill ground rockets right after liftoff.

The magazine reported that some officials believe the Israeli study will validate the UAVs as a lower cost solution compared with manned fighters.

It added, other officials are determined to assign the intercept mission to manned aircraft to support retention of at least an 18-wing USAF fighter force.

JORDAN TELEVISION
Tel: 77311-19

PROGRAMME TWO
17:00... Surprise Surprise
17:30... News in French
18:00... Fast Pas Réviser
18:30... News in Hebrew
19:00... News in Arabic
20:30... You Bet Your Life
21:10... Stolen Lives
22:30... News in English
22:30... The House of Eliot

PRAYER TIMES
03:50... Fajr
05:25... (Sunrise) Dhuhr
12:35... Dhuhr
16:16... 'Asr
19:45... Maghrib
21:20... Isha

CHURCHES
St. Mary of Nazareth Church, Sweith, Tel. 310740
Assembly of God Church, Tel. 632785
St. Joseph Church, Tel. 624990
Church of the Annunciation, Tel. 637440
De la Salle Church, Tel. 661757
Terrence Church, Tel. 622366
Church of the Annunciation, Tel. 623541
Anglican Church, Tel. 630851, Tel. 628543

WEATHER
Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.
Fine weather conditions will prevail with winds northwesterly moderate to active. In Aqaba, winds will be northerly active and seas calm.
Min./Max. temp. 14 / 29
Aqaba 13 / 34
Deserts 18 / 32
Jordan Valley 22 / 35
Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 28, Aqaba 32 Humidity readings: Amman 29 per cent, Aqaba 32 per cent.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS
NIGHT DUTY
AMBULANCE: Dr. Issam Ammar 990504, Dr. Nidal As'ad 751672, Dr. Yousef Sammour 615648, Dr. Jamal Ismail 847351, First pharmacy 661912, Fardous pharmacy 778336, Al Asena pharmacy 637055, Nairoukh pharmacy 626672, Al Saleh pharmacy 636739, Yacoub pharmacy 644945, Shmeisani pharmacy 637660, Nairoukh pharmacy 626672, Najih pharmacy 847632
FIRE: Dr. Ahmad Qasbi 905644, Alqada pharmacy 985417
ZARQA: Dr. Fawaz Hamdallah 903644, Khalid pharmacy 985417

EMERGENCIES
Food Control Centre 637111

HOSPITALS
AMMAN: Civil Defence Department 661111, Civil Defence Emergency 630341, Rescue Police 192, 611111, 637777, Fire Brigade 891228, Blood Bank 751212, Highway Police 843402, Shmeisani Hospital 696390, Traffic Police 630212, Public Security Department 602800, Price Complaints 661176, Water and Sewage 897467, Amman Municipality 787111, Complaints 623101, Repairs 623101, Abdali Telephone Repairs 661101, Jordan Television 773111, Radio Jordan 774111, Water Authority 680100, Jordan Electricity Authority 815615
ZARQA: Electric Power Company 636381, RJ Flight Information 08-53200, Queen Alia Int. Airport 08-53200
HUSSEIN MEDICAL CENTRE: Khalidi Maternity, J. Amn 642816
AKILAH MATERNITY: J. Amn 642441/2, J. Amn 642362, Malhas, J. Amman 636140, Palestine, Shmeisani 6641714, Shmeisani Hospital 669131, University Hospital 845845, Al-Muassir Hospital 6672219, The Islamic, Abdali 66612737, Al-Ahli, Abdali 6641646, Italian, Al-Muhajreen 7710103, Al-Bashir, J. Ashrafieh 77511126, Army, Marha 89161115, Queen Alia Hospital 66240590, Amal Hospital 674155, ZARQA: Zarqa Govt. Hospital (09)983323, Zarqa National Hospital (09)90560, Ibn Sina Hospital (09)986732, Al Hikmah Modern Hospital (09)99999
JERICO: Princess Basma Hospital (02)725555, Greek Catholic Hospital (02)72277, RJ Flight London (02)747100, AQABA: Princess Haya Hospital (03)314111

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (08)53200-5, where it should always be verified.

ARRIVALS
Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)
06:30... Bangkok (RJ)
09:00... Damascus (RJ)
09:30... Jeddah (RJ)
10:00... Dubai, Abu Dhabi (RJ)
10:15... Laraca (RJ)
10:25... Bahrain, Doha (RJ)
11:00... Beirut (RJ)
11:30... New York, Amsterdam (RJ)
12:25... Brussels, Paris (RJ)
12:30... Istanbul (RJ)
12:45... London (RJ)
13:00... Madrid, Geneva (RJ)
13:35... Athens (RJ)
13:45... Frankfurt (RJ)
22:30... Rome (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)
13:30... Abu Dhabi, Bahrain (GF)
14:25... Moscow (SU)
19:05... Tunis, Casablanca (RJ)
20:20... Cairo (MS)
21:15... Beirut (ME)
01:25... Amsterdam (TA)

DEPARTURES
Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)
06:45... Beirut (RJ)
09:05... Frankfurt (RJ)
12:40... Istanbul, Vienna (RJ)
12:40... Tunis, Casablanca (RJ)
12:30... Amsterdam, New York (RJ)
13:00... Athens (RJ)
13:30... London (RJ)
21:05... Riyadh (RJ)
21:30... Jeddah (RJ)
22:30... New Delhi (RJ)
22:30... Abu Dhabi, Dubai (RJ)
22:45... Singapore, Jakarta (RJ)
23:00... Bangkok (RJ)
00:00... Damascus (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)
07:20... Rome (AZ)
14:30... Doha, Bahrain (GF)
16:05... Moscow (SU)
19:05... Laraca (CY)
21:55... Cairo (MS)
02:25... Amsterdam (KL)

HJAZ RAILWAY TRAIN
Dep. Amman... 8:00 a.m. every Monday
Arr. Damascus... 5:00 p.m. every Monday
Dep. Damascus... 7:30 a.m. every Sunday
Arr. Amman... 5:00 p.m. every Sunday

MARKET PRICES
Upper/lower price in fils per kg.
Apple... 700 / 400
Apricot... 850 / 500
Banana... 680
Banana (Mukammal)... 620
Cabbage... 240 / 160
Carrot... 340 / 220
Cherry... 1200 / 700
Cauliflower... 340 / 220
Cucumber (large)... 100 / 60
Cucumber (small)... 220 / 140
Eggplant... 180 / 100
Garlic... 650 / 450
Lemon... 380 / 240
Marrow (large)... 80 / 40
Marrow (small)... 160 / 90
Mushroom... 180 / 150
Orange... 380 / 250
Onion (dry)... 160 / 80
Sweet Melon... 340 / 240
Pepper (hot)... 340 / 240
Pepper (sweet)... 360 / 240
Potato... 380 / 250
Peaches... 700 / 500
Tomato... 140 / 70
String beans... 500 / 400
Watermelon... 130 / 80

MARKING A NEW YEAR: Minister of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Abdul Salam Abadi Saturday speaks to worshippers at a ministry-organised religious ceremony at Al Hussein Mosque in Amman marking the New Hijri year which started Thursday. Other speakers at the ceremony included Chief Islamic Justice Sheikh Izeddin Al Khatib Al Tamimi and Mahmoud Sartawi, dean of the Sharia Faculty at the University of Jordan. Senior government officials were among the worshippers attending the ceremony (Petra photo)



Officials to clarify sales tax application amid reports of market exploitation

By P.V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Some if not most answers to businesspersons' questions on the modalities of applying the new sales tax are expected to be provided by customs and sales tax departments today at the Chamber of Industry against an uproar in the local media over what are seen as ambiguities and a state of confusion over the levy.

The Chamber of Industry, in consultation with industrialists, has prepared a list of questions that will be put to the customs and sales tax department officials at today's 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. gathering, a spokeswoman for the Chamber of Industry said.

Businesspersons from all walks of trade, economists, columnists, Parliament members and officials are expected to attend the event, where the different aspects of the tax and the mechanisms for applying it, and means to avoid duplicate taxation and protect the consumer are expected to be debated.

While the Chamber of Industry's questions are mostly related to the mechanism of the sales tax as far as local industries are concerned, other questions are also expected to be raised concerning importers, wholesalers, distributors and retailers.

The Ministry of Finance has released circulars outlining the modalities of the law and how the levy is taken directly from the importers and producers. But the guidelines have not

reached or are not being adhered to by the retail sector, the last link in the chain before the goods reach the consumer.

Officials familiar with the application of the law say that the levy, at this stage, is different from the sales tax system in force in most countries.

That system, mostly known as value-added-tax (VAT), calls for the retailer to issue a bill every time a sale is made, showing the price of the product and the applicable rate of tax. The collected tax is paid to the treasury every month.

In Jordan, where the sales tax went into force on June 1, the levy is collected at the point of entry into the country (for imported products) and at the manufacturers' before the goods are sent into the market (for local products).

A value-added-tax system will be implemented in the next phase of the levy, expected in five years.

Goods imported for re-export or for use in processing goods for export are exempt from the levy.

In the case of an importer-manufacturer, the amount paid as sales tax at the customs point would be adjusted against the levy on the finished product while it enters the local market.

Under the present system, the only parties directly involved in reflecting the tax in their books are importers and actual producers, and there is no role whatsoever for wholesalers, distributors and retailers, officials point out.

The officials note that

importers' and producers' prices to wholesalers, distributors and retailers include the sales tax although not shown separately in the invoice.

As such, they point out, there is no justification for a grocer of a supermarket or anyone else in the retail business to insist that their customers pay the tax on their purchases.

But many traders are behaving as if the value-added-tax has already taken effect and making the best out of the situation by demanding sales tax, local reports say.

"It is easy for a retailer to argue that the very term 'sales' applies to every transaction taking place in the country and that therefore everyone has to pay sales tax over and above the actual price of the product," noted an observer.

Local newspapers have been carrying critical commentaries and reports of how the tax law was being misused in the absence of what the writers see as the confusion surrounding the levy.

Economists say they had expected the government to give it at least one month before enforcing the law, during which it could have familiarised the business community as well as consumers as to the application of the law as far as they are concerned.

In the meantime, many traders are known to have added seven per cent to 20 per cent to prices for goods already in stock. The sales tax is not applicable to 55 items, mostly foodstuffs, medicines education mate-

nals, and is applicable on other products on a seven per cent to 20 per cent scale depending on the nature of the product.

"Someone is making hay while it shines," commented an official when asked why many merchants insist to their customers that they are obliged to collect the tax and that the amount would be remitted to the Tax Department.

The official said the way out for consumers from such exploitation was to demand a bill of sale from the shop, clearly showing the amount of "tax" that the seller levied. "I can assure you no one will issue such a bill since it is illegal for retailers to levy the tax," said the official, who preferred anonymity.

On the other hand, some traders, in the absence of what they expected to be clear guidelines to them, are ensuring that they will not incur losses if they are asked to pay sales tax retroactive to June 1.

Some merchants are levying the tax on products which "entered the market" before June 1 regardless of whether they already carry the levy, which was paid in the form of a consumption tax, in effect since 1992.

The consumption tax was also applicable at the customs point of entry into the country.

The Sales Tax Law replaced the Consumption Tax Law, and goods on which the consumption tax was paid are not subject to the new levy.

"It is a free-for-all in the market now," commented an observer. "Everyone wants to collect the tax."

1993 GDP up 5.7% over 1992

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Jordan posted a gross domestic product (GDP) of JD 2,281.8 million during the year 1993, registering an increase of 5.7 per cent over 1992, preliminary figures released by the Central Bank of Jordan (CBJ) show.

The latest statistical bulletin of the CBJ also said that the Kingdom's gross national product (GNP) during the year was JD 3,459 million at market prices compared with JD 3,135 million in 1992.

The largest contributor to GDP was the industrial sector with JD 1,538.7 million followed by government services with JD 439.5 million, private non-profit services to households worth JD 19.3 million and domestic services of households worth JD 4.3 million.

After reducing imputed bank services from the total, the GDP at factor cost stood at JD 1,995.1 million. With the addition of indirect taxes (less subsidies) worth JD 326.7 million, the GDP at producers' prices stood at JD 2,281.8 million.

A further split-up showed that (figures for 1987 are also given since that was the last full year of uninterrupted financial activity before the dinar was devalued):

— input from agriculture, hunting, forestry and fishing rose to JD 168.3 million from JD 153 million in 1992 (JD 116.1 million in 1987);

— input from mining and quarrying declined to JD 52.4 million from JD 53.8 million in 1992 (JD 75.5 million in 1987);

— input from manufacturing rose to JD 264.5 million from JD 249.5 million in 1992 (JD 203.6 million in 1987);

— input from electricity and water rose to JD 64.2 million from JD 61.7 million in 1992 (JD 64.7 million in 1987);

— input from construction rose to JD 183.7 million from JD 164 million in 1992 (JD 135.2 million in 1987);

— input from wholesale and retail trade, restaurants and hotels rose to JD 70.2 million from 65.5 million in 1992 (JD 264.2 million in 1987);

— input from transport,

storage and communication rose to JD 293.4 million from JD 279.4 million in 1992 (JD 290.4 million in 1987);

— input from finance, insurance, real estate and business services rose to JD 402.5 million from JD 383.3 million in 1992 (JD 293.4 million in 1987); and

— input from community, social and personal services rose to JD 39.5 million from JD 38 million in 1992 (JD 37.8 million in 1987).

The figures showed that the major sectors to suffer as a result of the economic problems faced by Jordan in 1988-89 were wholesale and retail trade, restaurants and hotels, and mining and quarrying.

The collective input from wholesale and retail trade and hotels and restaurants plunged from JD 228.6 million in 1988 to JD 77.5 million in 1989 and JD 54.3 million in 1990. The sector showed an increased output of JD 702 million in 1991 and JD 65.6 million in 1992.

The input of the mining and quarrying sector dropped

to JD 70 million in 1988 from JD 75.5 million in 1987, rose to JD 77.4 million in 1989, again dropped to JD 67.6 million in 1990, JD 54.1 million in 1991 and JD 53.8 million in 1992.

Producers of government services contributed JD 376.4 million in 1987, JD 401.5 million in 1988, JD 385.5 million in 1989, JD 383.6 million in 1990, JD 390 million in 1991, JD 414.6 million in 1992 and JD 439.5 million in 1993.

Indirect taxes (less subsidies) totalled JD 332.4 million in 1987, JD 309.6 million in 1988, JD 210.5 million in 1989, JD 246 million in 1990, JD 250.7 million in 1991, JD 316.6 million in 1992 and JD 326.6 million in 1993.

The sharp jump in taxes in the year 1992 was mainly attributed to the introduction of a consumption tax, which was replaced by a sales tax from this month.

The CBJ bulletin said the figures for 1993 were preliminary and will be adjusted later, according to figures adopted by the Department of Statistics.

Police search for assailant in shooting of Sahab man

By Rana Hussein
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Amman police are investigating the possible attempted murder of a 20-year-old Sahab man on Friday, Public Security Department (PSD) reports showed.

The report said that Rashed I.S. was shot several times in the chest and head by an unidentified assailant.

The victim's brother, Ali, told police he had gone to visit his brother and found him in bed in a pool of blood.

Police said they recovered some bullets and empty shells scattered near the victim's body.

A PSD official told the Jordan Times Saturday that no weapon was found. He declined to elaborate on the incident.

Rashed, who underwent surgery at Al Bashir Hospital, is listed in critical condition.

The attending doctor told the Jordan Times that Rashed was transferred to the intensive care unit (ICU), adding that there is a slim possibility that the young man would survive.

Accident injures six people

Six people were injured on the Jerash-Zarqa Road when the pickup truck they were riding in lost control and rolled over, a Civil Defence Department (CDD) report said.

According to the report, the pickup was heading towards Zarqa when it lost control, veered off the road and rolled over.

The injured were taken to Jerash Military Hospital where they were listed in good to fair condition, the report said.

Meanwhile, CDD reports said that last week, various types of accidents resulted in the death of 12 people. The report added that the CDD responded to 527 emergencies; of which 119 were fires.

According to CDD Public Relations Director Captain Abdul Raouf Ma'aytah, most of the emergencies involved poisonings. He explained that many individuals had eaten weeds while picnicking, especially in the Jordan Valley.

Capt. Ma'aytah said some weeds are edible but should also be washed carefully before consumption. Others, he explained, are poisonous.

Tourism activity soars in Wadi Mousa region

MA'AN (Petra) — The southern region of Wadi Mousa, close to the ancient Nabataean city of Petra and the nearby town of Taybeh, are currently witnessing a flurry of tourism activity, with at least 2,500 foreign tourists visiting the area daily, according to Ma'an Governor Hussein Habashneh.

In 1992, 117,000 people visited the rose red city of Petra, and the first six months of last year witnessed an increase in the number of tourists of the ancient site estimated at 25 per cent over the same period the previous year, said Mr. Habashneh.

But he pointed out that the southern tourist attraction currently has limited hotel facilities with a total of 226 rooms in addition to 169 rooms in Petra's four government-rated hotels and 57 rooms in four other non-rated hotels.

In order to cope with the upsurge of tourism activity in the area, Mr. Habashneh said work has started on setting up nine new hotels with a total of 1,135 rooms along a strip stretching south from Wadi Mousa to Taybeh.

One of the hotels at Taybeh which is nearly finished has 86 rooms with 172 beds; another hotel being built between Wadi Mousa and Taybeh will have 794 rooms with 1,588 beds; and inside Wadi Mousa town work is under way on the construction of two hotels with a total 255 rooms.

In all, JD 24 million is being invested in these projects which together will make available 3,000 beds, according to Mr. Habashneh.

He said that the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities expects that 1,135 jobs will be created with the establishment of these new hotels.

Mr. Habashneh added however, that the southern tourist area is in serious need of modern road networks because the present roads are narrow and exposed to landslides. He expressed hope that work on developing the roads will be carried out soon.

In addition, he said designs for a new sewerage system have been drawn up, and the

cost was calculated at around JD 4.5 million.

Referring to telephone and electricity services, Mr. Habashneh said they are available covering all the tourist and residential areas of the region, and the Jordan Electricity Authority (JEA) is currently expanding its services to the new hotel sites, while the Telecommunications Corporation (TCC) says the present telephone exchanges provide 4,500 lines which are sufficient for the region at present.

But Mr. Habashneh believes that the Wadi Mousa area still lacks appropriate tourist markets offering souvenirs.

Clean-up starts in Aqaba

Meanwhile, the Tourism Department, assisted by local Aqaba hotels and various other government departments in the port city, Saturday announced a two-day clean-up campaign on the southern coast of Aqaba starting Tuesday.

The announcement was made following a meeting attended by representatives of various concerned parties under the chairmanship of Princess Basma Bint Ali.

The Princess urged the local authorities and residents to help keep the coast clean, stressing Aqaba's significance as one of the main tourist attractions in the Kingdom.

Tourism is one of the main foreign currency earners for the national economy, and last year it earned the Kingdom JD 390 million from the visit of more than three million tourists to Aqaba, said the Princess.

In discussing preparations for the two-day campaign, Princess Basma said that 85 divers will work underwater to remove pollutants and various waste materials.

The commander of the naval force in Aqaba said that his sector was controlling the shores to prevent ships from dumping waste in the harbour area.

Ports Authority Director Dureid Mahasneh outlined his office's efforts to keep the beaches clean for vacationers.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Three ministers sworn in

AMMAN — Three newly appointed Cabinet ministers who were out of the country when Prime Minister Abdul Salam Abadi reshuffled his government late Wednesday were sworn in Saturday before His Majesty King Hussein. The ministers are: Samir Kassar, minister of transport, Mohammad Thumibat, minister of state for administrative development and Mohammad Thweib, minister of state. Present at the swearing-in ceremony were His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, Prince Abdullah Ben Al Hussein, Dr. Majali and Chief of the Royal Court Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker.

Sharif Zeid attends JUST graduation

AMMAN (Petra) — Royal Court Chief Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker Saturday attended the graduation ceremony of the sixth class of students at the Jordan University of Science and Technology (JUST). Sharif Zeid awarded diplomas to the graduating students, who numbered 635. Of the total, 584 have completed the requirements for the bachelors degree; the rest were graduate students.

Prince Ra'd welcomes young patriots

AMMAN (Petra) — Chief Chamberlain Prince Ra'd Ben Zeid Saturday welcomed at the Royal Court a group of youths who walked from Aqaba to Amman in observance of Arab Army Day and the anniversary of the Great Arab Revolt on June 10. The group began its walk on June 5 and arrived in Amman on the evening of June 10. The Prince voiced his appreciation for their gesture, which he said set a good example for Jordanian youth who have a true sense of national belonging and respect for the principles of the Great Arab Revolt.

House judiciary panel to meet

AMMAN (Petra) — The Judiciary Committee at the Lower House of Parliament is expected to convene today to discuss the endorsement of a government concession granted to the Jordan Tanning Company in 1994 and a draft law on the protection of the environment for 1994.

New telephone subscription office opens

AMMAN (Petra) — A new telephone subscription office Saturday opened at Al Abdali Telecommunication Centre behind the Ministry of Interior to provide telephone

services to citizens, according to Telecommunications Corporation (TCC) Director General Ahmad Nawawi. With the opening of this office, the number of subscription offices in Jordan comes to 30. Citizens will be able to file telephone subscription applications and settle their telephone bills at the new office. Mr. Nawawi said the corporation plans to set up additional offices in various parts of the country. He added that the TCC will issue a subscribers' manual containing subscription procedures, transfer of telephones, required documents and a breakdown of applicable fees, in addition to some telecommunications regulations.

260 Industrial projects registered

AMMAN (Petra) — Industrial projects registered with the Ministry of Industry and Trade in the first quarter of 1994 amounted to 260, with a total estimated capital of more than JD 63.5 million, according to a ministry statement. The statement said that 252 industrial schemes with a total capital of JD 46.6 million were registered in the same period of last year. It said the new projects involved chemicals, plastics, food stuffs, paper, textiles production and services.

Quality control workshop opens

RAMTHA (Petra) — A five-day workshop on quality control and production opened at the Jordan University of Science and Technology (JUST) Saturday with the participation of 25 representatives of Jordanian universities and public and private sector businesses. Topics related to promoting the quality of Jordanian products and competing on foreign markets will be tackled at the meeting which has been organised in cooperation with Concordia University in Canada.

Agricultural seminar concludes

AMMAN (Petra) — The Arab Organisation for Agricultural Development (AOAD) Saturday concluded a five-day training seminar for staff employed in Jordan's agricultural extension services. The seminar, which was held in cooperation with the ministry of Agriculture, was attended by extension services staff operating in various governorates, according to Khalidoun Subeidi, head of the Extension Information Department. Mr. Subeidi said that the ministry has 104 extension services staff members working through 19 agricultural departments and 36 extension services centres in the Kingdom.

Arab Thought Forum to review activities

AMMAN (Petra) — The general assembly of the Arab Thought Forum (ATF) will convene a two-day meeting in Morocco towards the end of this month to review the forum's activities and general reports on 1993 and 1994, according to Ali Umleil, the ATF's secretary general.

Addressing a press conference here Saturday, Dr. Umleil said the general assembly meeting will focus on two working papers dealing with Arab economic development and the Palestinian-Israeli economic agreement.

In reviewing the ATF's activities in 1993, Dr. Umleil said that the forum organised several seminars, one of which was dedicated to promoting the status and the future prospects of children in the Arab World.

The ATF participated in numerous world activities, mainly those organised in Amman, as well as the Arab-European seminar held in Istanbul and the cultural seminar held in Italy.

Dr. Umleil said that ATF's active members number 140, adding that 21 world institutions hold regular contacts with the forum.

WHAT'S GOING ON

- ★ Film entitled "Long Gone" at the American Center at 5:00 p.m. (113 minutes).
- ★ EXHIBITIONS
- ★ Painting exhibition by artist George Bakjouri at Al Balqa Art Gallery (Tel. 720677).
- ★ Exhibition of traditional embroidery and handicrafts at Al Hayat Group showroom, Gardens Street, Ellayan Building (Tel. 687956).
- ★ Painting exhibition by Jordanian artist Abdul Ra'uf Sham'oun at Darat Al Funun of the Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation in Jabal Lwaildeh. Also showing "permanent" exhibition of 56 Arab contemporary artists (Tel. 643251/2).
- ★ Plastic art exhibition by artist Mohammad Al Ameri entitled "Body" at Baladna Art Gallery (Tel. 687598).
- ★ Exhibition of paintings by Fatima El-Helu at Goethe-Institut.
- ★ Photography exhibit entitled "Faces of Jordan" at the American Center.
- ★ Exhibition of photographs of "The Living Dead Sea" by Paula Williams-Brown at The Gallery of the Hotel Jordan Inter-Continental.

Awqaf minister briefs Fullbright delegation

AMMAN (J.T.) — A 13-member delegation from the Fullbright Foundation in the U.S. met with Minister of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Abdul Salam Abadi Saturday to learn about the ministry's activities.

The delegation, most of whose members are scholars of Islam, were briefed on the ministry's organisation of services at mosques, the Zakat (collection of alms for the poor) and the Haj (pilgrimage).

Dr. Abadi also spoke about Jordan's responsibility towards the Islamic holy places in Jerusalem, including Al Aqsa Mosque and the Dome of the Rock.

Earlier Saturday, the delegation met with the general manager of the Islamic Bank,

Mousa Shihadeh, who briefed them on the Islamic dealings of the bank, which operates on profit-sharing rather than charging or granting interest on loans or deposits.

Islam, said Mr. Shihadeh, prohibits usury because of the negative effects and adverse impacts that usury has on social, economic and behavioural conduct of individuals and groups.

He said that the bank, along with many others in the Islamic world, was intent on applying the principles of Sharia (Islamic law).

He added that the bank aims at meeting economic and social needs in the area of banking services, financing and investments on a non-usurious basis.

Jordan Times

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They can't wait forever

IT APPEARS that the plight of 2.5 million Palestinian refugees will be kept on hold till the moment arrives when the "final status talks," on the Palestinian case are done with. This makes the refugee issue the second principal item after the future of Jerusalem to be shelved for the time being pending the resolution of all the other dimensions of the Israeli-Palestinian track. This much was confirmed Friday during a Worldnet satellite news briefing by U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs Daniel Kurtzer.

Judging by the past performances of the multilateral working group on Palestinian refugees, the focus has been more on how to alleviate the living conditions of the Palestinian refugees rather than on finding a political solution to their plight. This is discouraging since the bilateral peace talks between Israel and the Arab countries hosting Palestinian refugees have also not yielded any positive results towards giving the refugees much hope in their future.

While we concede that the refugee problem is very difficult, the legal parameters for its resolution lie in the U.N. General Assembly Resolution 194 of 1948 which accorded the 1948 refugees the choice between repatriation to their homes or accepting adequate compensation; and in U.N. Security Council Resolution 242 which affirmed, inter alia, the need for "achieving a just settlement of the refugee problem." It so happens that the fate of the 1948 refugees and the displaced persons constitutes the heart of the Palestinian problem and unless it is dealt with swiftly and affirmatively, all efforts to settle the Arab-Israeli conflict could fail. The Palestinians in the diaspora have been longing to return to their homeland for decades and view this right as fundamental to the resolution of their problem. To continue to change the terms of reference for solving their plight and to tell them now that they must wait till other problems are resolved would further undermine them and drive them into desperation.

Israel is on record as opposing the return of the 1948 refugees but it is less clear on the possible repatriation of those displaced by the 1967 Arab-Israeli war. This differential treatment between the two categories of Palestinians forced out of their country by the same enemy can be entertained only for purposes of orderly negotiations. Otherwise, the subject is the same and the treatment must also be the same at the end of the line. The consideration of the future of the refugees cannot be put off much longer.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

A COLUMNIST in Al Ra'i daily Saturday criticised donor nations which had pledged to provide billions of dollars to the Palestinian National Authority in the Jericho and Gaza regions, but have failed to do so, leaving the matters more complicated than they were before the Israeli pull out. Tareq Masarweh said that out of the promised billions, the Palestinians have only got \$5 million that can be by no means meet the basic and immediate needs for establishing the authority rule government in the two areas. It is not enough to send in a police force to Jericho and Gaza at a time when the living conditions in the two areas have deteriorated to such a degree that without pumping in sufficient funds to build a sustainable infrastructure and create jobs for the destitute population, no peace can be attainable, said the columnist. It is unreasonable to think that the National Palestinian Authority can raise funds through taxes under the present difficult situation, added the writer. Although most of the donor nations are non-oil producing countries, they have nonetheless pledged to provide assistance which should be forthcoming as soon as possible in order to smooth matters for the national authority and ensure the implementation of the Palestinian-Israeli accord. The European nations, he said, should not help the Israelis in attaining their evil goal of marginalising the Palestinian state which they know is eventually bound to emerge.

Al Dustour daily Saturday tackled the question of Palestinian refugees, accusing the American administration of working towards resettling the refugees in Arab countries now hosting them. Washington's denial of this plot does not mean that the plan does not exist, because the Americans hope this plan would help the Israelis solve the Palestinian and the refugees issues without giving the Palestinians their full rights, said the daily. The paper said that Israel has never made a secret of its continual drive to settle the Palestinian refugees in Arab countries to escape the prospect of giving compensation to them for their loss of land or to accept their return to be repatriated to their own homeland.

Sunday's Economic Pulse

By Dr. Fahed Al Fanek

Stop sacrificing Jordan's interests

THE JORDANIAN-Palestinian economic accord signed in Amman on Jan. 7 was not more than a nice prose, empty of any meaningful commitment except for the reopening of Jordanian banks and the usage of the Jordan dinar as a currency for circulation in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. However, the Palestinian-Israeli economic agreement, signed in Paris on April 29, killed that accord and prompted renegotiation with the Palestinian side for a new agreement.

A Palestinian economic delegation led by Ahmad Qouriea, Abu Alaa, came to Amman to amend the old agreement. A new agreement, camouflaged under the title of a working programme for action was drafted. Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat ordered his representative not to sign the so-called programme for action because some secondary points needed careful study. In the language of Arab politics, this means putting the agreement on hold until further notice. Thus, at this moment, there is no valid document to specify the economic relations between Jordan and the Palestinians.

The absence of a Palestinian-Jordanian economic agreement is, of course, bad, especially when the economic relations between the Palestinians and Israel are well-defined and documented in detail and precision. But worse than the absence of agreement is a bad and one-sided deal, which was doomed from the very start.

I am afraid the aborted draft agreement, or programme of action, is unfair to Jordan. It represents a complete giving up of Jordanian national interest. Therefore, we should be grateful to Mr. Arafat for blocking it, even though he did that for reasons not related to Jordanian interests or lack of fairness in the deal, but because he is against any strong connection with Jordan, and because he puts more priority on the relations with Israel.

Admittedly, we have no right to blame the Palestinian side for their position vis-a-vis Jordanian banks or Jordanian currency. The PLO is free to make its own independent decisions, being the sole representative of the Palestinian people. It can grant or deny licensing to Jordanian banks even though it committed itself to licensing all Israeli banks operating in the occupied territories. It is also free to accept or refuse the dinar as a legal tender or a currency for circulation or including it under the label "other currencies" even though it accepted the Israeli currency as a legal tender. We cannot and should not impose anything on the Palestinians against their will.

But we can and must blame the Jordanian delegates for sacrificing Jordanian interest. The draft accord foolishly

"Blocking the Jordanian-Palestinian agreement by the PLO is a valuable opportunity to write it off completely. We either obtain free access to the West Bank and Gaza or we don't. One-sided free trade is outrageous. The economists appointed by the Jordanian government to represent Jordan should be accountable for their extremely bad judgement unless they have instructions to put Jordan last, which would not be surprising."

calls for free trade between Jordan and the Palestinians without restrictions and free of any customs duty. This is absurd because the preamble of the agreement refers to the Palestinian-Israeli agreement, which limits the freedom of the Palestinian Authority to import from Jordan to a small list of commodities and with the approval of Israel. The major items in the list are oil, which is merely reexport of Iraqi oil, and cement, which the Palestinians are eager to replace it by locally produced cement within two years time, because the priority there is to replace Jordanian products first.

If Jordanian products will not be allowed to cross the bridges westward, except in accordance with a list imposed by Israel and only to satisfy part of the Palestinian market needs as decided by Israel, how come Jordan is expected to open up for all Palestinian products to cross the bridges eastward with no lists or limitations including fruits and vegetables of which we have surpluses, and industries with Israeli inputs, and Israeli joint ventures.

Blocking the Jordanian-Palestinian agreement by the PLO is a valuable opportunity to write it off completely. We either obtain free access to the West Bank and Gaza or we don't. One-sided free trade is outrageous. The economists appointed by the Jordanian government to represent Jordan should be accountable for their extremely bad judgement unless they have instructions to put Jordan last, which would not be surprising.



M. KAHIL

Limited options on N. Korea

By Evelyn Leopold
Reuters

UNITED NATIONS — In trying to reverse North Korea's alarming defiance of nuclear safeguards, the United States and its allies have several options they can pursue at the United Nations, none of them very good.

They could press for a tough Security Council resolution slapping sanctions on North Korea but that could drive the country's unpredictable leaders to refuse future inspections of nuclear facilities and keep the world guessing on how many atomic bombs Pyongyang has or could make.

They could also settle for a protest without sanctions and risk signalling other potential nuclear powers that they can ignore at will any controls imposed on them by the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).

The crisis came to a head last week when the Vienna-based International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) was prevented from properly inspecting fuel rods discharged from a nuclear reactor.

By this action, North Korea wiped out most of the evidence on whether spent fuel had been removed in 1989 to produce plutonium for nuclear weapons.

So far the United States has moved cautiously, preferring discussions before circulating a draft resolution.

Instead members consult in small groups on U.S. suggestions for a two-step approach: a warning or threat and then an imposition of sanctions in incremental steps.

"It doesn't prove anything to rush into something. We have to do this in a very deliberate and concerned way," said U.S. Ambassador Madeleine Albright.

"The Americans will have to check constantly on what the traffic will bear," said one key Security Council member, in reference to China's lack of enthusiasm for sanctions.

"So far the United States has been publicly cool to the idea of more talks after Washington held months of negotiations with North Korea and also held out hopes for economic and diplomatic benefits if Pyongyang allowed IAEA inspectors to do their work."

Beijing frowns on sanctions but has not disclosed whether it would use its veto power to kill any threatened embargoes. Chinese envoys have repeated daily they are opposed to sanctions in principle and prefer continued dialogue.

Russia also thinks sanc-

tions won't work and has tried to steer a middle course.

Diplomats said ambassador Yuli Vorontsov proposed three steps: a warning for North Korea to cooperate with international inspectors, a clear threat of sanctions with a deadline and the imposition of sanctions.

But the sanction threat would include Moscow's proposal for an eight-way international conference. The meeting would also pledge economic benefits for North Korea if it cooperated with the IAEA.

So far the United States

osals were gaining credence among some council members, as well as some U.S. officials.

No one knows the real goal of North Korea.

President Kim Il Sung may be playing for high stakes in the economic and political sphere with the United States. But he might also believe the price of ending Pyongyang's isolation is too high if the end of the road is German-style unification of the Korean Peninsula, an end to the Communist system and a loss of power for the current leadership.

Unlike Iraq, Yugoslavia and Libya, which suffer under varying degrees of sanctions, North Korea has survived so long on so little income that further deprivation might have little impact. But a no-sanctions resolution can be drawn up without some demands on what North Korea is expected to do.

Experts, including some in the Clinton administration, are divided on whether the Security Council should concentrate on preventing future safeguards violations only or try again to determine the past history.

IAEA Director Hans Blix, in a recent briefing to the council and the press, admitted it was unlikely the history of the reactor could still be verified, even if Pyongyang opened up two suspected nuclear waste sites.

Dicing with death

By David McDowall

FIERCE FIGHTING between peshmergas belonging to the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) at the beginning of May has brought into question the internal viability of a democratic and autonomous Iraqi Kurdistan. The fighting started at Qala Diza on May 1 and spread rapidly. In the northern region of Bahdinan, where the KDP holds sway, PUK offices were rapidly surrounded and their staff and fighters arrested and disarmed. Likewise in the PUK heartlands around Sulaymaniyah, KDP outposts were quickly overcome. The fiercest fighting took place in the middle ground. While Salahuddin fell to the KDP, neighbouring Shaqlawa was captured by the PUK. An uneasy ceasefire was only achieved after a week in which over 1,000 peshmergas and civilians were killed. PUK and KDP troops now eye each other warily in Arbil, the autonomous region's capital.

This is easily the most serious setback for the liberated area of Kurdistan since Iraqi President Saddam Hussein's advance into the area was halted in April 1991. It had been waiting to happen for months. The trigger for this sudden bout of bloodletting was a land dispute just north of Qala Diza. What took place reflects in microcosm the tensions and conflicts which still afflict Kurdistan. On May 1, Ali Hasu, a KDP commander, tried to turf farmers off some land near Qala Diza which his father had acquired as Mulla Mustafa Barzani's local delegate in 1970. No one locally recognised the legitimacy of Ali Hasu's claim because his father had seized the land by force majeure. Ali Hasu, like his father, was acting like a tribal agha, precisely the criticisms so often levelled against the Barzani leaders of KDP. And, true to its ideological anti-tribal posture, the PUK's local man was on the side of the peasantry. It was the shooting of the latter by Ali Hasu that triggered the fighting. Local people instinctively rallied to the PUK in their animosity against the rapacity of the agha system. Tribalism may be in retreat, but the bloodletting that followed demonstrated how potent tribal conflict, particularly when linked to the two rival parties, can be.

Rivalry between Barzani and Talabani

Overlaying such antagonisms is the rivalry between Mas'ud Barzani (KDP) and Jalal Talabani (PUK). Despite their frequent protestations of cordial cooperation, the truth is that each seems to be obsessed with outmanoeuvring the other. The KDP must have realised Ali Hasu was going to renew his father's land claim, and that this was bound to cause trouble. It was well known that Ali Hasu's father had been killed in a PUK ambush in 1983. In short, Ali Hasu's renewed land claim seemed like a clear KDP provocation.

Not that the PUK is innocent. According to the KDP, the PUK has been busy, despite its formal anti-tribal posture, creating an armed presence in Bahdinan through local tribes antagonistic towards the Barzanis, notably the Harkis and Baradostis.

This kind of contest poses a grave danger to Kurdistan's fledgling democracy. Even before this devastating round of fighting which has forced thousands of civilians to flee their homes, many Kurds were bitter about the way power-sharing has reduced government to a system of patronage operated by each of the two parties. "Fifty-fifty" is what they call the power sharing arrangement. It filters all the way down to local primary schools and policemen on the beat. If one administrator, policeman or school principal is a PUK supporter, then he must be balanced by a nearby KDP member of equivalent rank.

If there is a PUK man as government minister, then his deputy is KDP and vice versa. In fact it has led to two systems of command in each ministry. Forget about appointment on merit. Joining one or other party is virtually essential to advancement in any job in the gift of the political system.

Furthermore, by standing outside formal government,

Mr. Barzani and Mr. Talabani, have ensured that the real seat of power has little to do with the government, and even less with the elected parliament. Power rests with the two leaders. One (PUK) prime minister, Fuad Masoum, has already resigned, reportedly frustrated by decisions made over his head. Last December, in an attempt to resolve this dilemma, an eight-man "strategic committee" was formed, composed of Mr. Talabani, Mr. Barzani, the PUK prime minister, the KDP speaker and four others, two from each party. Because of tensions between certain members the committee has not yet met. It seems to be a moot point whether "fifty-fifty" demonstrates the strength or the weakness of the Kurdish experiment in democracy.

Effect on external relations

Unfortunately the KDP-PUK rivalry has split over to affect external relations. It would seem that the KDP has secured Iranian support, reviving the longstanding informal alliance dating back to the 1960s. Last December the Iran-backed Kurdistan Islamic Movement (KIM) was engaged in heavy fighting against the PUK. The KDP mediated between the two when the KIM was taking a severe beating from the PUK. Mas'ud Barzani's uncle, Sheikh Mubammad Khalid, is a leading light in Kurdish Hizb Allah, a party within KIM. One good turn deserves another. With KDP forces hard pressed by the PUK, Iran sent the KIM across the border to capture Halabja and Khurmal to the PUK's rear on May 5. The PUK reacted savagely, shelling both towns and killing over 150 KIM fighters. Among the bodies were those of six Iranian pasdaran. Mr. Talabani may now have cause to regret what has become a serious conflict with Tehran.

In the meantime Ankara has come to the conclusion that Mr. Talabani has been encouraging the PKK. It is well known that he has been meeting the PKK boss, Apo, Ocalan, when passing through Damascus. Since the PKK uses the remote valleys of Bahdinan as a springboard for attacks into Turkey, it is an ideal way to embarrass Mr. Barzani, for it demonstrates his inability to keep his own fiefdom in order. It is barely a month since Turkey launched a major incursion into northern Iraq in pursuit of its elusive foe.

Mr. Talabani (at the time of writing in Damascus) has been having difficulty getting home. He can hardly travel via Tehran. Although Ankara will probably reluctantly allow him to cross Turkey to get back home, safe conduct must then be obtained from Mas'ud Barzani as he must go through KDP territory to get to Arbil. In short Mr. Talabani finds himself in dissonance with all his neighbours at the same moment.

This might seem a small hiccup were it not for the ominous statements emerging from both Tehran and Ankara. Iranian Foreign Minister Velayati has recently spoken of the need for the Iraqi government to extend its control up to the border.

Meanwhile, Turkey is champing at the bit to resume its lucrative transit trade with Iraq, particularly by reopening its pipelines to the Mediterranean to Iraqi oil. The current government in Ankara, not to mention the military, is much less convinced of the value of the Iraqi Kurdish connexion than was President Ozal.

All this makes it vital for Iraq's Kurds to present their neighbours with a more reassuring image. The possibility that Ankara is being alienated as a by-product of the gamesmanship between Mr. Barzani and Mr. Talabani is indicative of how reckless is the game now in play.

The KDP and PUK face growing danger on three fronts: domestically they must restore public confidence and for that they must now put an end to the perilsous competition between their forces and allow democracy to fulfil its promise. Abroad they must try to avoid gratuitously offending Turkey and Iran (admittedly no easy task with Turkish and Iranian Kurds seeking to use the border areas). Above all, they must keep the Western powers persuaded that the Kurdish region remains worth defending.

Middle East International

King heads for London

(Continued from page 1)
now realises that our political stance and our demands were sometimes distorted."

Dr. Anani said Jordan, "which takes pride in its national unity and its independent national stance and dignity, is capable of conducting dialogue with the United States, which, in our

view, is the main political power in the world arena with powerful influence."

He said a good political climate, between the Kingdom and the United States would provide a very positive element for the country.

Before the King's departure, His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan was sworn in as Regent.

Jordan restates stand on Yemen

(Continued from page 1)
In fact the conflict was motivated by the move on the part of a separatist group that has been trying to split the country and confront the legitimate authority," the Yemeni envoy added.

He stressed that Yemen's 1990 unity did not come about by force of arms. "The Yemeni people voted for a constitution for the united country in 1991, and in a general election in 1993," he pointed out.

Mr. Ghanem said Sanaa categorically rejects the presence of any foreign troops on Yemeni soil and considers the southerners' demand for foreign forces or U.N. troops as a flagrant violation of the country's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

Stressing Sanaa's determination to end the crisis Mr. Ghanem said that the Yemeni leadership was committed to a ceasefire called by U.N. Security Council Resolution 924 "provided that the other side honoured that resolution."

"We know that certain parties continue to provide assistance to the separatists and we demand that such support be halted because it can only lead to further bloodshed," Mr. Ghanem said.

He said Sanaa would be forced to take "whatever measures deemed necessary" to stop any foreign interference in the country's internal affairs.

MPs unhappy over Cabinet

(Continued from page 1)
even the Islamic Action Front (IAF) did not encourage the proposal, saying the focus should be on studying the details and the impact of the developments in the peace process.

According to the sources, IAF deputies reiterated their ideological stand of opposing the peace process but said the focus at this point should be on discussing the "new developments and the meaning of a national government."

IAF spokesman Hamzeh Mansour declined comment on the bloc's position during the meeting but said the IAF believes the House "should not be absent from political developments which should be discussed immediately."

Mr. Mansour said his bloc withheld confidence from the government when it asked for it in December and "it witholds confidence now especially, that the prime minister ignored the parliamentary blocs" by approaching deputies to join his Cabinet as individuals when he introduced the reshuffle.

"The prime minister did not enter the house from the door," said Mr. Mansour in reference to the exclusion of the blocs from the negotiations leading to the reshuffle.

Deputy House Speaker Abdul Razzaq Tabeishar also stressed that the House should be allowed to play its role on the political scene in the Kingdom.

The no-confidence proposal, however, would not have been more than a political nuisance since the House cannot withhold confidence from the government during an extraordinary session.

In 1991, however, the government of former Prime Minister Taher Al Masri resigned when more than 40 deputies asked him to do so.

The deputies made the request when Mr. Masri introduced a government reshuffle which did not bring in representatives of the Constitutional Bloc, then headed by Deputy Premier Thouqan Al Hindawi, to the government.

The Muslim Brotherhood joined hands with the Constitutional Bloc and other lawmakers to demand the resignation of the government.

Meanwhile, deputies Mifleh Al Rheimi, Abdul Majeed Al Azzam and Hatem Al Ghazawi have resigned from the National Action Front, headed by Deputy Abdul Hadi Al Majali, apparently because of the way the reshuffle was handled.

Syrian move reflects discontent

(Continued from page 1)
communicated to Jordan that the "timing was not right" to hold the meetings of the Joint Jordanian-Syrian Committee, which would have been the first since the Gulf crisis.

"It is very clear the decision to postpone the meeting was related to Jordanian-Israeli negotiations," one source told the Jordan Times.

Reuters news agency quoted Arab diplomats as saying newspaper reports which last week quoted Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali as predicting immin-

ent progress on the Syrian track played a role in creating the tension. Dr. Majali denied the contents of the reports.

But sources noted that Jordan had made clear its commitment to a comprehensive peace in the Middle East and to maintaining coordination with all Arab parties to the peace talks.

Before the Jordanian-Israeli talks started in Washington Monday, King Hussein said that Jordan did not want to lag behind in the talks with Israel so it will not be the weak and marginalised link.

Jordan rejects hardline criticism

(Continued from page 1)
committed to fighting the peace talks.

Lebanese Deputy Prime Minister Michel Al Mar also accused Jordan of moving separately in the peace talks, adding "we hope the trends pertaining to Jordan are not true."

Dr. Anani said no-one has the "right to criticise Jordan for seeking to secure its territory and water," saying that U.N. Resolution 242, which provides the basis for the Arab-Israeli peace talks, rests on the return of land for peace.

"The agenda (of the

Jordanian-Israeli negotiations) speaks for itself," said Dr. Anani in confirming Jordan's commitment to a comprehensive settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict.

The agenda declares as its objective the attainment of a comprehensive peace.

At the end of their talks Monday, Jordan and Israel agreed to set up committees to discuss borders, water and economic development in the region next month.

Official sources said that the expert committees needed to hold their talks in the region due to the technical nature of the topics they will address.

Abu Alaa welcomes donors' aid

(Continued from page 1)
or Saturday, while Israel Radio said he would come within a week.

Jericho, a desert town of 15,000, is to be the seat of the Palestinian self-rule government.

However, Saeh Erakat, a member of the Palestinian self-rule government, played down the reports. Dr. Erakat, based in Jericho, said that when he spoke with Mr. Arafat by telephone early Saturday, the PLO chairman made no mention of his arrival date.

In Tunis, PLO officials said

no precise date had been set for Mr. Arafat's departure headquarters in Tunis. But one Arafat aide predicted it could be shortly after an Organisation of African Unity (OAU) summit in the Tunisian capital next week.

"The countdown has started. After the decision of donor countries to provide financial assistance to the Palestinian authority — any day — immediately after the African summit concludes would be the possible day for Arafat's arrival," said the aide, who asked not to be named.

'An agenda for development'

Ghali proposes a blueprint for reenergising the drive to improve the human condition

AMMAN (J.T.) — International experts have begun a five-day hearing of the "Agenda for Development" which U.N. Secretary General Boutros Ghali has proposed as a "blueprint for a reenergised drive to improve the human condition."

Dr. Ghali will present his final recommendations on the agenda in the U.N. General Assembly in September after taking into account the views presented at the hearings, which started at the U.N. Sunday, and the proposals of the meeting of the Economic and Social Council, scheduled to be held in New York later this month.

"The international community needs a new and compelling vision for the future," Dr. Ghali said in the report, which aims at revitalising the idea of development as one of the greatest achievements of this century.

Dr. Ghali said that "development is in crisis," as it is being undercut by a "post cold war avalanche of new problems inundating both poor and rich countries."

Peace, economy, the environment, social justice and democracy should be considered distinct aspects of a drive towards a better world, Dr. Ghali said. He said a new conception is needed for a universal, human-centred culture of development.

Central to the expanded new concept presented in the agenda, which is counterpart to his widely known "Agenda for Peace," published in 1992, is the role of the United Nations, "a forum where the voice of all states, great and small, can be heard with equal clarity, and where non-state actors can make their views known to the widest audience."

"Whether this vision is fulfilled or not will be measured by what this living generation of the world's peoples and their leaders make or fail to make of the United Nations," Dr. Ghali said. "But with the practical commitment of all peoples to the

advancement of a new culture of development, the coming celebration of the United Nations first half-century will be marked as a turning-point in the story of all humanity." The United Nations celebrate its fiftieth anniversary in October 1995.

In the secretary general's new formulation, each of the five dimensions of development, peace, economy, environment, social justice and democracy, are integral parts of the whole.

The secretary general recognises that mushrooming United Nations peacekeeping operations consume resources which donors could otherwise channel to the developmental activities of the United Nations. But the organisation's commitment to development is not wavering.

"Concerns have been expressed that the United Nations puts greater emphasis on peacekeeping than issues of development," the secretary-general said. "(But) these fears are not borne out by the regular budgets or the numbers of staff members engaged in peace and development."

"The concept of development — and decades of effort to reduce poverty, illiteracy, disease and mortality rates — are great achievements of this century," the secretary general declared in his report, which draws on contributions from member states and agencies and programmes of the United Nations system as well as other public and private sources.

"But development as a common cause is in danger of fading from the forefront of our agenda," the secretary-general warned, will not improve its condition by ignoring the welfare of future generations. "Progress," he said, "is not inherent in the human condition; retrogression is not inconceivable."

"Development has to be oriented towards each person in the world," he stated. "Beyond this must arise a

recognition that this human community includes the generations yet to come."

The secretary general called continued economic growth "the engine of development as a whole. Without it, he says, there will be no resources for coping with environmental degradation or pursuing programmes to confront such intertwined social crises as poverty, unemployment and the myriad facets of social disintegration."

To ensure growth, the secretary general argued strongly for pragmatic policies which take advantage of the efficiency of markets, since "governments can no longer be assumed to be paramount economic agents." But he also cautioned that governments must provide "regulatory frameworks," and that "previous development choices, political institutions and cultural values and expectations" must be taken into account by policy formulators.

Economic growth, the secretary general said, can be really sustainable only if it promotes full employment, poverty reduction and improved patterns of income distribution.

Moreover, he said, although structural adjustment "remains a necessary prescription to serious economic imbalance," governments must be helped in addressing "the dire human consequences of such reforms."

"Absolute poverty, hunger, disease and illiteracy are the lot of one-fifth of the world's population," the secretary-general said. "There can be no more urgent task for development than to attack both the causes and the symptoms of these ills."

Pointing out that the dichotomy between "hard" and "soft" options is a false one, Dr. Ghali stressed that "investment in human development is investment in long term competitiveness," and therefore indispensable to economic growth.

In that regard, he points to the increasing roles the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund are playing in social development, in policy formulation and in mobilising investment for developing countries, and urges "greater interaction between the policy advice and country operations of the Bretton Woods institutions, and the approaches and practices of other actors in development."

Economic and social council

Similarly, the fading of distinctions between national and international policies requires greater international policy coordination, said the secretary general. But "repeated efforts by the developing world to increase coordination, such as the current attempt to create G-7, G-15 connections, have failed." Such efforts should include action to alleviate the debt burden facing many developing countries, particularly multilateral obligations, about which "not enough has been done."

The Economic and Social Council has responsibility under the U.N. Charter for "the important and difficult task of coordinating the policies and activities of the United Nations and its numerous specialised agencies. The council also provides a ready and potentially powerful vehicle for helping to prioritise the allocation of international resources for development," the secretary general said.

"But over the years, the absence of clear policy guidance from the General Assembly, and the lack of effective policy coordination and control by the Economic and Social Council have resulted in an overall lack of cohesion and focus within the system."

Dr. Ghali said that coordination is also required for bringing together, at the country level, the strength of the United Nations system, "which constitutes an unpa-



Boutros Ghali

ralleled body of knowledge and expertise at the disposal on the developing countries."

Basis for peace

Pointing to the perils of inaction to the face of the stalled drive for development, the agenda noted that the combination of deteriorating economic conditions and social exclusion of large segments of the population from decisions affecting their lives is fuelling both separatist and extremist ideologies. In addition, "until development on a global scale improves, large populations will continue to move across borders despite efforts to control or impede their flow... In some countries, resentment against (such) migrants has fanned the flames of hatred and intolerance. So development is not only a fundamental human right," the secretary-general said, in

the report, it is also "the most secure basis for peace."

"Democracy supplies the only long-term and sustainable route to successful development," he added, not only in the realm of international politics, but within the United Nations system, where non-governmental organisations of every kind can join private groups in promoting heightened awareness and more determined commitment among their constituencies.

"The current situation calls for wider intellectual understanding, deeper moral commitment and effective policy measures," he said. "Without them, a half-century of considerable progress could be undermined. Worse, all peoples of the world will live on a deteriorating planet, and increasingly lose the ability to shape their destiny in a coherent way."

Arab and Israeli women meet in Morocco

By Mariam M. Shahin
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

MARRAKESH — A Middle Eastern-European women's conference here last week became the venue for the first ever large scale Arab-Israeli encounter outside the framework of the Arab-Israeli peace talks.

Over 200 Arab, Israeli, Turkish and European women gathered in this North African oasis city to inaugurate what was essentially the first Arab-Israeli-European meeting of its kind.

Entitled "Mediterranean and European Women's Conference — Women and Peace", the meeting brought together women from more than two dozen countries to discuss women's legal rights as well as social, political and economic conditions in which they exist.

Organised by members of the European Union, the conference was the culmination of at least five years of smaller scale meetings held between Palestinian and Israeli women in various European capitals. Women spoke and exchanged ideas in an amicable atmosphere during six workshops, most of which dealt with issues pertaining to the Arab-Israeli peace talks, as well as inter-dependence and cooperation among the states of the region.

Women's role in the peace process, conflicts and cooperation in the Mediterranean region, the decision making process, development and civil society and democratisation were the subjects debated during the three-day meeting.

The final declarations of the conference, known as the Marrakesh Declaration, declared that "encouraged by the hope emanating from the peace process initiated between the PLO and Israel (and which it hopes to see extended to the entire region), desirous of reinforcing the multiple initiatives of cooperation for the development of the region and... acknowledging the necessity of... recognising and supporting the role of women in the impending peace, (the conference) has established networks of women parliamentarians, women leaders of non-governmental organisations, housewives and female journalists and students in order to achieve this objective."

The venue of the conference was seen as a breakthrough for the Israelis, since it is the first of its kind in the Arab country.

Led by female cabinet minister and nominal head of the left wing Meretz Party Shalomit Aloni, the Israeli delegation included Knesset members belonging to both Meretz and Labour as well as a group of peace activists and journalists.

"We are very courageous as Eve was," said Shalomit Aloni in her opening address to the conference. "Eve took the first bite of knowledge while Adam hesitated — we too are taking such courageous steps towards a better future."

The Palestinian delegation, headed by Paris PLO representative Leila Shahid, who led a nine-member delegation from the occupied territories and Tunis.

Ms. Shahid, in her closing remarks, saluted the Israeli women who had closed ranks with the Palestinian women to attain better living and political conditions in the occupied territories. A real and complete peace, however, has yet to come, she said.

"A peace without Jordan, Syria, and Lebanon is no peace," said Ms. Shahid.

The European and Moroccan hosts of the conference said the five years of smaller scale meetings between Palestinian and Israeli women in various European capitals had laid the groundwork for this conference.

The rapprochement between Palestinian and Israeli women resulted in the founding of Israeli lobbying groups on behalf of Palestinians in Israeli political circles and the founding of an organisation called "Jerusalem Link", intended to encourage family reunification and other politically based issues that have affected Palestinian women and families.

Jordan did not send an official delegation but was represented by Senator Naeila Rashdan, former head of the Jordanian Women's Federation Haifa Bashir, head of the Queen Alia Fund Jackie Fakhoury and Jordanian writer Zuleikha Abu Rishah.

than issues pertaining to ethnic and religious groups. Arab, Turkish, and European women gave the Israelis a polite, if not necessarily warm, welcome.

Israeli women tried hard to create women's umbrellas between themselves and delegations from various other countries in the region. Most of their cooperation, it appears however, will continue to be with Palestinian women.

"The physical and political inter-action on the ground between Israeli and Palestinian women will continue to be the closest link between Israel and the Arab World," said one Palestinian delegate to the conference.

Initial fears by Palestinians that the Israelis would "use Marrakesh and the Palestinian presence there as a bridge between themselves and the larger Arab World" turned out to be partially justified.

The focus on women in the Arab World and Islamic sharia based laws pertaining to women left most Israeli delegates sidelined.

A large Algerian delegation tearfully asked the meeting for moral support in its efforts to deal with near civil-war-like conditions in the country.

"The conditions in Algeria today, the reign of terror, have nothing to do with politics or religion but with economic inequities. We women are one of the major targets and we ask you to help us overcome this terrible moment in our history," said a leader of the Algerian delegation in the final public forum.

The plight of women in Bosnia-Herzegovina was also focused on by the conference.

The final statement condemned "the inhumane fate reserved for women in regions of conflict, notably the systematic rape used as a weapon of war in ethnic cleansing."

ITALIAN COMMERCIAL MISSION TO AMMAN



Grimex

With the support of the Italian embassy and in close cooperation with the chambers of industry and commerce, the Businessmen Association, the Jordan Export Development and Commercial Centres Corporation and the World Trade Center, Grimex Srl is organising a mission of Italian businessmen to Jordan in order to promote and strengthen Italian-Jordanian trade relations.

The delegation consists of eighteen companies covering various fields specially selected to meet the needs of the Jordanian market.

The opening session will be on Sunday, June 20, 1994. Meetings will be held from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. and from 4:00 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. at the Forte Grand Hotel — Grand Ballroom.

Interested Jordanian parties are kindly requested to contact the following phone number: 696511 Ext. 438 from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. and from 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. as of Monday, June 13, to get an appointment with their Italian counterparts. Provided below is the list of companies participating in the mission and their specialised field.

List of Companies:

GEI	: Partially finished products for the artisan ice cream, production of Italian "Gelato."
Audolf e Bertola	: Production of horizontal and vertical pumps and submersible series.
Sussetto LO-MU	: Spare parts for all types of earth moving machinery. : Manufacturing of mould-equipment pressing and special machines and plants.
ISN	: Tubular elastic netting for hospitals.
Cattaneo Pistocchi Manzoni	: Ready-made clothes, neckties and accessories. : Clothes and accessories for men and women. : Electronic appliances, airconditioners, radio and television sets (Hi-Fi), in addition to a second division that handles medical instruments plus lenses and glasses. : Deals with the promotion of scientific medical congresses and meetings focused on the study and the updating of several pathologies; it consists of three divisions: a medical division, an educational division and a technical division.
Eurometing	: Fashionable stocks and shoes, gadget market and promotional products.
Scardina	: Chocolate and fruit jelly plus production machineries and equipment required for the production of chocolate.
Carpegna e Sabbadini	: Marketing and production of cooking equipment in (18/10) stainless steel for home and catering. : Computer software and hardware.
Gonzales Gedi	: Construction company. : Residential buildings and industrial and commercial constructions etc.
Dentalfilm	: Electronic materials. : Allots commodities for hygiene and disinfectants for hospitals, surgical seats and industry (food industry).
Marcopolo	: High definition self-developing X-ray for dental prognoses.
Cappa	: Recycling of waste, sewage and sludges. : New system recovers and transforms large masses of municipal solid waste.
Borello e Maffiotto	: Hairdressing materials, shampoos, dyes, hairsprays etc.
Grimex Srl	: Sanitary and bathroom fittings, all kinds of paper (sanitary, napkins etc). : Foodstuffs and wedding dresses

BIS aims to become more global after EMI moves out

BASLE, Switzerland (R) — The Bank for International Settlements (BIS), the world's oldest international financial organisation, wants to abandon its European focus and become more global following the creation of the European Monetary Institute (EMI).

A senior international banking source close to the BIS also told Reuters in an interview Saturday the substantial reserves of European Union central banks held in the BIS would be withdrawn immediately once the EMI, the forerunner of a Eurofed, moves to Frankfurt in October.

Currently the EMI is housed in the Basle-based BIS while its premises in Frankfurt's Eurotower are prepared for occupation.

The creation of the EMI gives the BIS the chance to become truly global institution rather than a mainly European one with some links to central banks outside Europe," the source said. "Europe will no longer be the

predominant centre of BIS activities.

The creation of the EMI has awakened old fears in the secretive institution, located in a distinctive circular skyscraper a stone's throw from Basle train station, that its days might be numbered.

The BIS Monday holds its 64th annual general meeting and the better part of the world's central banking community will gather in Basle.

Some bankers have speculated the BIS, which has come close to extinction before, might fade into the wings once the EMI, with some of the world's most powerful central banks, opened its doors in Frankfurt.

The world's oldest financial institution was founded in 1930 as a neutral clearing bank for German war reparations payments. At the 1944 Bretton Woods conference, which established the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, a recommendation was made that the BIS should be liquidated.

Once contacts between countries previously at war were reestablished after 1945, it was unanimously decided not to proceed with this recommendation. The BIS was seen as a tool to implement to the New Bretton Woods organisations and not a competitor.

From 1950 to the early 1970s the BIS successfully acted as agent for the OECD in the operation of the European payments union.

With the European central banks holding meetings in Frankfurt it will be easier for the BIS to encourage non-European countries to use the bank as a forum for operation," the source said.

Previously, they would often complain that when they came to the BIS too much time was taken up in European committees."

The source said the dominance of European central banks at the BIS had already begun to decline in recent years with the share of total deposits from European

banks compared with non-European banks sharply lower.

In a more global capacity the BIS could become a centre for operation on new financial instruments, the source said. The bank already houses the Basle committee on banking supervision which makes important recommendations on the regulation of international bank business.

Another possibility would be for the bank to return to its role as a clearing centre for the daily settlement of commercial bank transactions.

Cross-border settlement risk is one of the areas that regulators need to look at more closely and one possibility could be for the BIS to play an operational role in helping to reduce this risk," the source said.

EU central banks will not draw down reserves they hold at the BIS and transfer them to the EMI, for at least the next year, the source said.

Worldwide drop in piracy reported

KUALA LUMPUR, Malaysia (AP) — International shipping is enjoying a respite from pirates so far this year, an expert has said.

Only 39 raids have been reported in 1994, compared to more than 106 throughout the world last year.

The final count for 1993 will be much higher as additional reports are verified, said Mazlan Abdul Samad of the International Maritime Bureau (IMB). There were 107 piracy cases in 1992 and 115 in 1991.

More patrols and closer coordination among Indonesia, Singapore and Malaysia have curbed the number of attacks in and near the Straits of Malacca, once pirates' favourite hunting ground, Mr. Mazlan said in an interview.

An average of 2,000 vessels each day use the straits, a key waterway connecting the Indian Ocean and the Pacific Ocean. The peril of piracy has not been eliminated entirely, Mr. Mazlan said, since there were four incidents in three days earlier this year.

The IMB opened a piracy centre in Kuala Lumpur with Mr. Mazlan as Far East regional manager in mid-1991, when the menace seemed out of control.

Danger still exists farther north in the China Sea, in the Hong Kong-Hainan-Luzon triangle. Earlier this year, China denied allegations that its official agencies were responsible.

Shipping executives in Hong Kong said boats from China were involved in about half of nearly 100 attacks

reported in an 18-month period.

"China seems to have taken measures to control the situation," Mr. Mazlan said. Boats and the uniforms of crews have been colour-coded for accountability.

Piracy continues to be a risk in Africa, particularly at ports such as Lagos, Nigeria, where large ships anchor outside the harbor before being assigned a berth.

Pirates usually don't assault their victims, and normally go for the contents of the master's safe or whatever valuables can be found quickly, he said.

"Piracy is usually an opportunistic crime, not an organised one. Pirates will attack a ship when they deem it a soft target that can be boarded easily," he said.

An exception has been the "phantom ships" cases controlled by organised syndicates. Four have been reported in Asian waters since last June.

In these cases, a freighter chartered to carry cargo from one port to another may "disappear" and show up elsewhere under another name. The cargo has been stolen and its owner and insurer are the losers.

Mr. Mazlan said a cargo of timber worth \$5 million bound from Malaysia to South Korea went astray in such a manner last year.

"Most players we know are syndicate members," Mr. Mazlan said. They have shipping expertise and know how to get and, most important, how to sell the cargo.

GATT chief urges world policy on trade, environment

GENEVA (R) — GATT world trade watchdog chief Peter Sutherland Friday urged governments in the developed and developing world to work together to coordinate policies on trade and environment.

Speaking at the opening of a meeting of GATT officials and non-governmental organisations, he said the new world trade pact signed in April had laid a firm base for pursuing environmental protection together with sustainable development.

Mr. Sutherland said demands for a cleaner environment and environmentally-friendly goods and services were increasing.

"The speed and direction of events in this regard, from the demands of consumers to the market place and then to government legislation, makes the need for bilateral policy

cooperation urgent for the sake of both the environment and the trading system," he declared.

The two-day meeting was organised by GATT, the 125-nation General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), for an exchange of views with environmental bodies and experts who have sometimes been fiercely critical of the trade body.

Some "green" groups argue that its aim of boosting world trade runs against environmental interests and that the trade files GATT administers prevent countries enforcing stricter environmental laws.

In a statement timed for the meeting, the Swiss-based World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) said a new GATT dispute settlement understanding "makes trade override environment policy instead of making the two

mutually supportive."

The new procedure, the WWF said, "fails to provide the necessary safeguards to protect the environment and advance sustainable development."

The understanding emerged from the seven-year Uruguay Round Trade negotiations which ended with a treaty signed in Morocco in April which also provides for a new and more powerful World Trade Organisation (WTO) to absorb GATT next year.

Resistance to tougher environmental measures within GATT has come largely from developing countries who fear they would be forced by industrialised states to put up barriers against competitive goods from the Third World.

But they finally agreed on creation of a committee on trade and the environment in the WTO, due to be born on

Jan. 1, 1995 under the present timetable.

In his speech Friday, Mr. Sutherland recognised that some countries "still retain serious concerns that within the subject of trade and the environment there still hide dangerous manifestations of trade protectionism."

But he said GATT states, who will automatically become members of the WTO, had recognised that trade and environment linkages "cannot be defined uniquely in terms of trade restriction."

"On the contrary, it is trade liberalisation, not restriction, which holds the key in so many areas to producing a coordinated policy response to environmental problems by allocating scarce resources, including environmental resources, more efficiently, and by generating wealth," he declared.

Sweden proposes harsh social welfare cuts

STOCKHOLM (R) — Sweden's finance minister proposed cuts in social welfare benefits Friday to rescue sagging state finances, signalling a further erosion of the country's welfare state.

Anne Wibble's list of austerity measures will cut across all sectors of society including the elderly, sick and unemployed, the heart of Sweden's welfare system.

"It is tough. The measures will affect everyone," she said.

The opposition Social Democrat's shadow finance minister lashed out at Ms. Wibble for "breaking an unbreakable accord in getting further away from a social-liberal policy."

Ms. Wibble detailed the government's medium-term budget savings plan in parliament.

The government said when presenting its supplementary budget in April it would extend by 20 billion crowns (\$3 billion) to 100 billion (\$13 billion) the total target for its

savings plan and extend it by one year to 1999.

Sweden's massive state budget deficit, forecast at 198 billion crowns (\$26 billion) for the current budget year to June 30, has spurred a jump in market interest rates and worry among politicians.

"If we do not stop the increase in state debt, rising interest rate costs will break down the welfare system. Our children and grandchildren will inherit only debt," Ms. Wibble said.

The government, however, is not introducing any significant austerity measures in the current election year.

The opposition Social Democrats, the architects of the welfare state, have also advocated the need for savings although they are short on specifics.

The party, criticising the government for a high jobless rate, could very well take over power after the election. They have half of voter support in opinion polls.

Financial Markets

Jordan Times in co-operation with Cairo Amman Bank

U.S. Dollar in International Markets

Currency	New York Close 10/6/94	New York Close 10/16/94
Sterling Pound	1.5095	1.5090
Deutsche Mark	1.6672	1.6664
Swiss Franc	1.4098	1.4057
French Franc	5.6760	5.6705
Japanese Yen	103.99	103.53
European Currency Unit	1.1570	1.1590

Barrencurrency Interest Rates Date: 10/6/1994

Currency	1 MTH	3 MTHS	6 MTHS	12 MTHS
U.S. Dollar	4.1300	4.3100	4.6300	5.1900
Sterling Pound	4.7500	4.9400	5.1300	5.7500
Deutsche Mark	4.9400	4.8800	4.8800	5.0000
Swiss Franc	4.0600	4.1300	4.1900	4.2500
French Franc	5.3100	5.3100	5.4400	5.6300
Japanese Yen	1.8800	1.9400	2.0600	2.2500
European Currency Unit	5.8400	5.8100	5.8400	6.0000

Central Bank of Jordan Exchange Rate Bulletin Date: 11/6/1994

Currency	Bid	Offer
U.S. Dollar	0.6990	0.7010
Sterling Pound	1.0535	1.0588
Deutsche Mark	0.4189	0.4210
Swiss Franc	0.4967	0.4992
French Franc	0.1232	0.1238
Japanese Yen	0.6746	0.6780
Dutch Guilder	0.3736	0.3757
Swedish Krona	0.0434	0.0436
Italian Lira	0.0434	0.0436
Belgian Franc	0.0434	0.0436

Other Currencies Date: 11/6/1994

Currency	Bid	Offer
Bahraini Dinar	1.8380	1.8506
Lebanese Lira	0.040775	0.041685
Saudi Riyal	0.1861	0.1869
Kuwaiti Dinar	2.3200	2.3700
Qatari Riyal	0.1897	0.1908

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR SUNDAY JUNE 12, 1994
By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

GENERAL TENDENCIES: Mercury is going retrograde until July 30 so this is the time to rework old projects that you felt had large potential and to deal with anything from the past that needs to be completed.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Don't make plans in the morning which would require change later. Study a new philosophy that could be helpful to you for a new assignment.

Taurus: (April 20 to May 20) Morning is not good for pursuing some personal aims but the evening is fine for social activities. Sidelstep a foe who is out for blood.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Seek a spot early in the day where you can gain peace of mind. Don't force any issues with family members whom you are depending on.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) A close tie could be careless in the morning but don't let this bother you. Strive for increase happiness from those close to you.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Be sure you don't ink someone in authority or you could regret it later. Plan the new week's activities wisely and make progress for yourself.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) Wait until the afternoon before putting across

any ideas to others, but use orthodox methods for best results which you can depend upon.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Study your obligations well and plan how best to handle them. The afternoon is best for having a serious talk with mate of concern to you both.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Wait until later in the day before talking over a personal matter with loyal friends. Be poised at all times for their responses.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) A fine day for getting out and visiting long-time friends. Follow your hunches which are accurate now and can be trusted.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Morning plans are not very good but later they work out just fine for you. Show that you are understanding what is required.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) The situation at home requires diplomacy in the morning. Make only changes which are necessary to get whatever is required for success done.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) A new project you have in mind needs more study before you put it in operation. Make plans to improve your social life for the days ahead.

Bulgaria wins \$1.5 billion aid package

PARIS (AFP) — Bulgaria has secured external financial and technical support worth \$940 million for 1994 here and provisional pledges of another \$620 million for 1995 to back its market-economy reforms.

Nine key donor countries and several international financing bodies which took part in a two-day meeting of the World Bank-sponsored Consultative Group for Bulgaria agreed that its "ambitious reform efforts merited continued international assistance."

In a statement, the group said Friday that its members "indicated significant support through financial and technical assistance with the effect that the financing gap for 1994... will be filled."

"The foreign exchange shortfall, as identified by Bulgarian authorities in cooperation with the International Monetary Fund (IMF)

and the World Bank, was estimated at \$940 million for this year and an almost identical amount of \$915 million for 1995.

Although the donors at this point only promised two-thirds of the latter amount, or \$620 million, they stressed in their statement that the gap for 1995 "is also likely to be filled."

Finance Minister Stoyan Alexandrov, who headed the Bulgarian delegation, told re-

porters he had reiterated to the meeting his government's commitment to "mass privatisation."

A special programme to be launched soon, following the imminent amendment of present legislation to create the required legal framework, would speed up the privatisation process.

The private sector now accounts for over a third of economic activity in the country.

Peanuts



Andy Capp



Mutt'n'Jeff



JUMBLE THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME by Henri Arnold and Mike Angillon

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

PHULS

BUAQS

TORMAR

ZEBRAL

What I must have dropped a few pounds

WHAT THE WINNING MARATHON RUNNER LOST.

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise word as suggested by the above cartoon.

Print answer here: HER

(Answers tomorrow)

Yesterday's Jumbles: FRAME FACET DEAFEN FORGOT

Answer: What she called the stockbroker's proposal — ALEXANDER DEER

THE Daily Crossword by Betty Jorgensen

ACROSS

1 Song

5 Word's reason

10 Hedges sweater

14 Dva Gnu

15 Dron

16 Kind of sur

17 Star of a movie

20 Paid notes

21 Calendar year

22 Bird's cousin

23 Mountain lake

24 Bern's river

25 More of mora

31 Tawny

32 Spectra

33 Jack's second

35 General Bradley

36 Place for sports

38 Kick

39 Underneath

40 Kin of the

41 Semes

42 More of mora

46 Aleutian

47 Multitude

48 Driving over

51 Machine car

52 Car

53 End of mora

54 Sings

55 Strapping vine

56 Ch. 1 and fever

57 Dva carter

58 Place of address

59 Form of address

60 Roman road

61 To any art

62 Wac

63 Strapping vine

64 Strapping vine

65 Tawny

66 Bern's river

67 African desert

68 Kansas river

69 Laces

70 Run's home

71 Run's home

72 Run's home

73 Run's home

74 Run's home

75 Run's home

76 Run's home

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Yesterday's Puzzle Solved:

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U.S. tightens sanctions on Haiti; Americans, Canadians asked to leave

WASHINGTON (Agencies) — President Bill Clinton ordered new sanctions against Haiti including a ban on commercial flights to further pressure the country's military rulers as U.S. and Canadian nationals were urged to leave Haiti.

The United States and Canada ordered some embassy staff in Port-Au-Prince to leave Haiti and urged most of their nationals to leave the country as soon as possible.

Mr. Clinton also ordered a ban on financial transactions, which will prevent money being sent from the United States into Haiti except for transfers of up to \$50.

Mr. Clinton said the new measures, which come on top of a near-total U.N. trade embargo imposed last month, were "necessary to intensify the pressure on Haiti's military leaders" to leave power.

The message is simple: "Democracy must be restored, the coup must not endure," Mr. Clinton said.

The president said the airlines that currently link the United States and Haiti, American Airlines and Haiti Transair, would halt commercial flights from June 25.

Officials in Ottawa announced that Canada would join the United States in suspending commercial flights to Haiti.

It was not clear if France, the Netherlands and the Dominican Republic, the only other countries operat-

ing a commercial air service to Haiti, would follow suit.

The State Department also urged an estimated 6,000 Americans in Haiti to leave before U.S. flights — which account some 75 per cent of air traffic into Haiti — are suspended, and said it was withdrawing some embassy personnel as a safety precaution.

"The political situation in Haiti remains unstable with potential throughout the country for random violence, sporadic disturbances and criminal acts," the communique said.

"The police and judiciary are unable to provide adequate levels of security and due process."

In Port-Au-Prince, a Canadian embassy official said most Canadians would be urged to leave Haiti by June 25, but added, "the final decision will rest with each individual."

Embassy officials said about 2,400 Canadians are currently in Haiti, a majority of whom have double nationality.

In Haiti, Port-Au-Prince Mayor Evans Paul urged military leader General Raoul Cedras to step down so that Haitians need not have to suffer the sting of the sanctions.

"The way to avoid these new tough, punishing sanctions that will hit all Haitians lies in applying the Governors Island accord" signed

by Mr. Aristide and Gen. Cedras last year that called for Gen. Cedras to step down.

The sanctions are aimed at forcing Haiti's military leaders to step down and allow the return of elected President Jean-Bertrand Aristide, who was ousted in a coup in September 1991 and has been living in exile in the United States.

"Mr. Clinton's special envoy on Haiti, William Gray, declined to say how long Washington was prepared to wait for sanctions to take effect before considering other options such as military action."

"As the president has said, all options are on the table," Mr. Gray said. "There are mixed views as regards the timing as well as the tactics of other possible solutions," if diplomatic efforts fail, but nothing is being ruled out.

But the administration stressed it would do its utmost to ensure the new sanctions would not further victimise the poor of the most impoverished nation in the Americas.

The ban on financial transactions will not apply to humanitarian activities, Mr. Gray said.

The United States currently provides more than \$70 million in humanitarian aid and feeds one million Haitians, or one in five of the population, and plans to increase that figure, he said.

The \$50 limit, he said, was a significant sum for a country with an average annual per capita income of only \$350.

But in Port-Au-Prince, a businessman said the \$50 limit would "destroy democracy in Haiti and leave thousands of children dead."

Mr. Gray said the new financial sanctions would "heighten the impact rather dramatically" on the business elite who have up to now supported the coup leaders.

Meanwhile, an aid group's office was gutted by a fire and a Canadian man severely beaten while in police custody — signs that foreigners may be targeted as more sanctions strangle Haiti.

The explosion and fire that destroyed the office of Inter-Aid Friday came two hours after President Clinton suspended commercial air flights to Haiti starting June 25.

Arson was suspected in the blast at Inter-Aid's downtown office. There were no casualties. Workers were at lunch and the office was empty at the time, said officials with the European organisation. They didn't elaborate.

Army firefighters took nearly an hour to reach the scene.

Also Friday, police released Victor Edmond, 38, of Quebec, who had been missing since his car was stopped at a roadblock earlier this week.



Port-Au-Prince residents walk through downtown street filled with garbage. Sanctions against Haiti were intensified suspending U.S. commercial air travel and most financial transactions between the two countries (AFP photo)

Blair bids for U.K. Labour leadership

LONDON (AFP) — Tony Blair, runaway favourite for the Labour leadership, has set out his vision for "a strong cohesive society" in press interviews published Saturday to coincide with his formal declaration to stand.

Mr. Blair in interviews with the Guardian and the Financial Times outlined his commitment to continue modernising the party.

But mindful of the need to win support among trade unions and constituency activists he insisted that changing the party's policies did not mean uprooting its traditional values.

"In my view the central message of the modern Labour Party is to reunite notions of individual aspiration with notions of a strong cohesive society so that the process of social improvement leads to self-improvement," he said.

Mr. Blair, the 41-year-old shadow home secretary,

emphasised the need for economic development and for education as a means to develop opportunity.

He backed full employment and a minimum wage implemented with flexibility and common sense.

And he stated the need to move on from argument over private versus public sectors to partnership between employers and employees.

He said Labour's project for the country would be "to develop the notion of a dynamic modern economy which is delivering opportunity to all its people and not merely to a limited number."

He emphasised the need "to set out a new economic agenda for what will very shortly be new millennium" and called for "moving beyond arguments about public versus private sector, market versus state."

"There is no long-term future for this country on another basis than by baying

a highly educated workforce. That will come primarily through education and skills."

He added: "We need to develop at the workplace the notion of a modern industrial partnership so that employees and managers are working together, not set in some irredeemable conflict against one another."

He stressed that "macro-economic policy has got to be governed by principles of international cooperation."

But Labour would not slavishly accept everything suggested by its European partners.

"You take the social chapter (of the Maastricht Treaty). What I always used to say about the social chapter is that it was right we should have binding principles and flexible means... that we should ensure that it is implemented in a way that is sensible and flexible."

Police uncover smuggling ring of rare birds

BUENOS AIRES (AFP) — Police and customs officials uncovered a smuggling network dealing in exotic bird species, some on the verge of extinction, and seized 500 specimens valued at \$1 million. Tipped off by a Russian tourist, authorities raided a chicken farm near Pilar, around 100 kilometres south of here, that served as a front for the illegal business. "There were beautiful, exotic birds whose sale is prohibited, especially rare species of cockatoos" that can fetch up to \$12,000 from unscrupulous collectors, a police spokesman said. Authorities did not report any arrests. The federal Wildlife Administration will classify the birds and determine where to place them, the spokesman said. Police were alerted to the smuggling ring by a Russian tourist who was stopped in Ezeiza International Airport here as he was boarding an Aeroflot flight home with a parrot. The tourist, it turned out, had complied with all the legal requirements to take the parrot out of the country, but before leaving he told police he had made the purchase at a chicken farm, arousing suspicion.

Hanoi's rabid dog problem is getting worse

HANOI (R) — Hanoi authorities are campaigning for people to have their dogs vaccinated against rabies following the death so far this year of 20 people bitten by rabid dogs, a veterinarian said Saturday. The deaths were more than double the number in the first five months of last year and all the victims were bitten by dogs that had not been vaccinated, a spokesman for the city's veterinary department said. Twenty-seven died of rabies in 1993 in Hanoi. Only 60 per cent of the estimated 110,000 dogs in the capital have been vaccinated this year, he told Reuters. Authorities have used television advertisements to campaign for vaccinations. Owners who refuse to have their dogs vaccinated face fines.

Le Bon receives libel damages

LONDON (AP) — Simon Le Bon, lead singer of the pop group Duran Duran, received substantial libel damages Friday from two newspapers over false allegations that he cheated on his wife. The Daily Mail and Today apologised in the High Court for the distress and embarrassment caused to Le Bon and his wife, Yasmin, and the woman named in the stories. The newspapers falsely reported that Le Bon had an affair with a woman in Rome while his fashion model wife was at home looking after their two daughters. The amount of the damages and costs to be paid by the newspapers was not disclosed. Le Bon was not in court.

Lesbian couple sues magazine for 'outing' them

NEW YORK (AP) — Two lesbians are suing a magazine for \$17 million for published a photo they say revealed their relationship without permission. Valerie Merriwether and Rosetta Ford filed suit over a photograph in the June issue of Popular Photography showing them in a limousine in formal clothes en route to their wedding ceremony. "The caption reads: 'Lesbian couple: Light from the limo sunroof illuminates two women on the way to their commitment ceremony in Greenwich Village.' Ms. Merriwether and Ms. Ford, neither postal employees, said neither their families nor their co-workers had been aware of the relationship. The photograph was shot by the limo driver, Kathy Shorr, in 1988. Ms. Merriwether said she denied Ms. Shorr's request to allow the photo to be published, telling Ms. Shorr that she and Ms. Ford come from religious families who would be heartbroken about their relationship. Catholicism Flickinger, a lawyer for Popular Photography, said the magazine had not seen the lawsuit, and she had no comment. Ms. Shorr, also named in the lawsuit, said, "I didn't do anything that was intended to hurt these women."



Russian paratroopers from a peacekeeping regiment train on special stairs in their military camp in Gndau, Abkhazia. The commander of the Russian troops in the Transcaucasus has been ordered to prepare another three battalions for peacekeeping in the area of the Georgian-Abkhazian conflict (AFP photo)

Abkhazia agrees to Russian peace force

MOSCOW (AFP) — Leaders of the breakaway Georgian Republic of Abkhazia have agreed to the deployment of a Russian peacekeeping force, Russian news agencies reported Saturday.

Russian Defence Minister Pavel Grachev and Abkhazian Parliamentary Speaker Vladislav Ardzinba agreed to the deployment in talks Friday, they said.

Russian President Boris Yeltsin said Saturday he expects the peacekeepers to be deployed in Abkhazia, in western Georgia bordering the Black Sea, from next week.

Mr. Yeltsin was briefed by Gen. Grachev on the results of talks with Georgian President Eduard Shevardnadze in Tbilisi and Mr. Ardzinba in Gudauta, in Abkhazia, Radio Russia said in a report monitored by the BBC.

Mr. Shevardnadze had already given his agreement

in principle earlier Friday.

As a first stage of the operation, a contingent of 1,500 Russian soldiers will be deployed in a buffer zone along the Inguri River separating Abkhazia from the rest of Georgian territory, Russian Defence Ministry officials said.

Agreement in principle for this stage of the operation was reached at talks between the Abkhazia and Georgian in Moscow on May 14.

Mr. Yeltsin Thursday signed a decree authorising the deployment of the peacekeepers but said it could only come into operation if it was approved by the upper chamber of the Russian parliament.

The chamber last week voted against sending Russian forces but Gen. Grachev said Saturday he hoped it would now approve the new decree at a special session scheduled for Tuesday, ITAR-TASS news agency re-

ported.

Mr. Yeltsin said the process of introducing a peacekeeping contingent directly to the conflict zone would most probably begin on the 14th or 15th of June, Radio Russia said.

Gen. Grachev has been in Transcaucasus since Wednesday, left Tbilisi Saturday for Baku for a meeting with Azerbaijani President Gaidar Aliyev.

Azerbaijan has been fighting a six-year war with Armenia over the disputed area of Nagorno-Karabakh.

Gen. Grachev was touring the Caucasus in an apparent bid to increase Russian military presence in the volatile region. Before arriving in Tbilisi, he signed an agreement with neighbouring Armenia establishing a permanent Russian military base there.

Russia already has 23,000 troops in the Caucasus, a legacy from the Soviet era.

Russian security chiefs vow crackdown on crime

MOSCOW (R) — Russia's top crime-fighters vowed Saturday to join forces in a new drive to purge Russia of gangsters that are terrorising people and businesses and undermining confidence in the government.

At a joint news conference, the heads of all main security organs outlined a 1994-95 anti-crime programme that will cost an estimated three trillion roubles (\$1.5 billion).

The government has been preparing the programme, including several draft laws for some time, saying Soviet-era laws did not reflect new realities and prevented the police from acting resolutely.

"It is simply impossible today to work under the old regime with outdated laws," Interior Minister Viktor Yerin said.

He said a new anti-crime law was being drafted and should be ready to present to the State Duma, the lower chamber of parliament, in a week.

"This will allow us to go on the offensive in realising the programme," he said.

Russian President Boris Yeltsin said Friday he had ordered the security forces to rid the country of what he called criminal filth.

"Criminal forces are trying to occupy key positions in the economy, and are even bursting to go into politics," Mr. Yeltsin told a Kremlin news conference.

Organised crime, often linked to a corrupt bureaucracy, has flourished in Russia.

Some U.S. army women are ready for combat

FORT CAMPBELL, KY. (AP) — As military leaders consider whether female soldiers should get more chances to serve in combat, seven women in the 101st Airborne Division say ability — not gender — is what counts in a fight.

"I think women should be allowed in any area of combat," Spec. Tracy Stephens, 26, a clerk from Socorro, N.M., said in an interview. "This is a very hot issue for me."

Ms. Stephens described in great detail and with much enthusiasm the mobile artillery operated by her husband, who is stationed at Fort Sill, Okla. She said she would like to do that, too.

Army Secretary Togo West is to make a recommendation on whether women should be allowed to serve as pilots of special operation unit helicopters and operators of the multiple launch rocket system, a key artillery weapon. His decision is expected

Japanese coalition woos Socialists

TOKYO (AFP) — Japan's coalition leaders Saturday renewed an appeal for the Socialists to return to the government amid news reports that Prime Minister Tsutomu Hata was ready to replace the entire cabinet.

Former Prime Minister Morihiro Hosokawa told a party meeting that "I will never spare my effort in arranging conditions for the return of the Social Democratic Party (SDP), which angrily left the government in April over infighting."

At the meeting, Mr. Hosokawa, leader of the Japan New Party, pledged to play a key role in reorganising the current political framework as part of reforms he had promised to complete during his eight-month term.

Yuichi Ichikawa, head of the Buddhist-backed Komeito, one of the influential parties in the coalition, said Saturday: "We are ready to hold heart-to-heart talks with the SDP."

Mr. Ichikawa told his party meeting that "in order to stabilise the political situation, we strongly expect the

SDP to return to the government."

Coalition sources told the Yomiuri Shimbun newspaper that Mr. Hata was ready to replace all the ministers in a bid to pave the way for Socialists' return.

They said the ruling coalition had unofficially offered the proposal to the SDP, whose walkout left Mr. Hata with the nation's first minority government in almost four decades.

The report followed SDP leaders' recent remarks that the party might come back to the government if Mr. Hata voluntarily stepped down.

The daily said the SDP was divided over the offer, with some members calling for a general resignation of all the cabinet members, including Mr. Hata.

SDP Chairman Tomiichi Murayama said: "A general resignation is necessary. We cannot accept only a considerable reshuffle."

But some SDP senior officials said the party should compromise and stop short of asking Mr. Hata's resignation.

8 Burma opposition leaders surrender

RANGOON (AFP) — Eight members of the main opposition National League for Democracy (NLD) have surrendered to government authorities in the Kachin State capital of Myittha, the official New Light of Myanmar said Saturday.

The dissidents, all of whom won seats in parliament in the May 1990 election and later went underground, turned themselves in on June 5, the paper said.

They were the nucleus of the northern underground NLD group based at Pajao, the former Kachin Independent

Army (KIA) headquarters at the border with China, the paper added.

The NLD overwhelmingly won the 1990 election but the military government here refused to hand over power, and cracked down on what the opposition insisted.

The eight MPs fled between 1991 and 1993 to Manipur, the stronghold of the Karen National Union (KNU) on the Thai-Burma border, the newspaper said.

They decided to surrender because they were disillusioned by splits and power struggles within the exile

groups and because the KIA recently signed a truce with the government, it said.

It quoted the eight as saying the dissident government in exile was about to merge with armed groups at the Thai border to form the "Federal Government of Burma."

The KNU is one of three anti-Rangoon groups yet to make peace with the government. Eleven others, including the KIO, have agreed to ceasefire agreements in return for regional development aid.

They were the nucleus of the northern underground NLD group based at Pajao, the former Kachin Independent

Congress rules out freedom for Kashmir

NEW DELHI (R) — India's ruling Congress Party Saturday ruled out any solution to a bloody rebellion in Jammu and Kashmir state which would lead to the region's separation from the rest of the country.

Human Resources Development Minister Arjun Singh, moving a foreign policy resolution at a two-day meeting of the All India Congress Committee (AICC), also proposed closer political ties with the West and with China, Iran and Russia.

Mr. Singh said India regretted its poor relations with Pakistan over Islamabad's support for a four-year-old separatist uprising in Kashmir.

"It is time that Pakistan realised India will never allow its territorial integrity to be trifled with," he said in the resolution adopted by the AICC.

Nor, he added, would India "be party to any arrangement which leads to the separation of Jammu and Kashmir from the rest of India."

India and Pakistan have fought two of their three wars

since independence from Britain in 1947 over Kashmir. India told the United Nations in 1948 that it wanted a plebiscite to determine Kashmir's status but subsequently backed down.

Indian Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao said recently he was willing to discuss with Pakistani leaders the issue of Kashmir, where up to 17,000 people have been killed in four years of violence.

Pakistani diplomats said the Congress resolution left no room for them to discuss the issue.

"If India says Kashmir cannot be free, what does it want to talk to us about," one diplomat said.

Mr. Rao convened the AICC meeting to set the agenda for crucial state assembly polls this year and as a mid-term review for his three-year-old government.

Congress politicians say privately their party's tough stand on Kashmir was prompted by a tougher line advocated by the right-wing Hindu Bharatiya Janata Party, the main opposition to the Congress.

The Congress resolution said India wanted closer political and economic links with South East Asian countries and looked upon them as partners to speed its economic resurgence.

"The emerging contours of distinct Asian identity is a welcome development, with which India would like to fully identify itself," it added.

Priests report 170 Rwandans abducted, massacred in Kigali

KIGALI (Agencies) — Rwandan Hutu militiamen seized 170 mostly Tutsi people from a religious compound in Kigali in front of two European priests who said Saturday they feared all had been butchered.

Fathers Henri Blanchard, from France, and German Otto Mayer told reporters the militia forced their way into the compound in Nyamirambo district Friday and ferried the civilians away in a truck.

Fr. Mayer said they later saw the same truck, surrounded by angry militia, with 10 bodies on and around the vehicle.

"There were 10 (bodies), some of whom we recognised, on the ground and on the truck. To get past they had to remove the bodies," said Fr. Mayer.

The 170 Rwandans being sheltered by the priests were among thousands of civilians trapped behind government or rebel lines in the embattled capital. A desperately under-strength United Nations force says the civilians are in constant danger of death and has been trying to evacuate them.

Some 2,300 people have been evacuated by the U.N. across battle lines in the capital, but the main obstacle to this process has come from Hutu militia blamed for the deaths of countless thousands in Rwanda since early April.

The priests, who escaped to a rebel-held part of the city Saturday, said a mob of 30 militia led by a man called Kigindi came to their compound and declared they wanted to evacuate all the civilians.

The priests refused to open the door to the building where the people were sheltering, so Kigindi and the others tried to force it by shooting at it and hacking at it with an axe.

When this did not work, they threw a teargas grenade



Two militiamen of the Hutu-led government forces patrol the market of Kigali. Violent clashes kept up in the Rwandan capital where rebels were "slowly gaining some ground" against government forces, a U.N. military spokesman said (AFP photo)

into the kitchen and finally got the door open, after which they made several trips to ferry the people away.

Fr. Mayer, 47, said he tried to run for help at the nearby College St. Andre, where government soldiers are based and where hundreds of other mainly Tutsi civilians are sheltering.

A soldier stopped him at a roadblock and turned him away.

As he ran back, a mortar bomb fired from rebel lines exploded close to him, wounding him in the left arm.

Going to seek medical help the two men were turned back at a roadblock manned by militia. A local government official came to their aid and after they passed the roadblock they saw the truck surrounded by corpses and militia.

"They were really crazy, very angry," said Fr. Mayer.

The vehicle was about 150 metres from a police station, although the priests said no regular police or government forces took part in the abductions.

A new round of U.N.-brokered talks aimed at securing a ceasefire in Rwanda's bloody inter-tribal conflict opened here Saturday after fresh clashes in the capital overnight and into the early morning.

Rebels and leaders of the armed forces were convening for peace talks for the fifth time in less than two weeks.

General Marcel Gatsinzi, head of the government forces delegation, criticised the rebel Rwanda Patriotic Front (RPF) Friday for foot-dragging and said he thought them unlikely to agree a truce anytime soon.

He said participants so far had discussed only the beginning of the preamble to a U.N.-drafted document detailing ways to implement a truce.

However a spokesman for the U.N. Assistance Mission

in Rwanda (UNAMIR), Pierre Mehru, said he considered "they are holding serious discussions."

The FPR has demanded an end to massacres in government-controlled areas and called on pro-government radio stations to stop broadcasting propaganda which they say incites violence.

The talks are being held at UNAMIR headquarters, in the Amahoro Hotel, with UNAMIR deputy commander-in-chief General Henry Anyidoho of Ghana presiding.

Kigali remained extremely tense Saturday, particularly in the southwestern Nyamirambo district, bastion of the Hutu militia which has been partly beaten by the rebels.

Fighting broke out between government and rebel troops April 6 when an aircraft carrying the presidents of Rwanda and Burundi crashed under mysterious circumstances on approach to Kigali Airport in Rwanda, killing both leaders.

Nigeria's Abiola placed under house arrest

LAGOS (AFP) — Moshood Abiola, the presumed winner of Nigeria's presidential poll a year ago this weekend, was put under house arrest Saturday as he prepared to declare a rebel government to mark the anniversary.

Mr. Abiola, Nigeria's main opposition leader, had been threatened with arrest on charges of treason if he went ahead with plan to set up a "government of national unity" Sunday, anniversary of the June 12, 1993 election that he was widely seen as having won by a large majority.

He had agreed to postpone the inauguration of his rival government from Sunday, but said it would take place "in the next few days."

A close aide to Mr. Abiola said the Muslim billionaire was placed under arrest at 4:00 a.m. at his home in Ikeja, a residential neighbourhood to the north of the capital.

An AFP correspondent on the scene said about 20 riot police armed with assault rifles were deployed outside his home and were blocking anyone from entering or leaving the premises.

Another 60 policemen and an armoured vehicle were stationed at the entrance to the road leading to the Muslim billionaire's residence, the correspondent said. About 100 Abiola supporters gathered not far from the police cordon, but there was no sign of unrest.

Last year's poll was declared free and fair by international observers but annulled by then junta leader General Ibrahim Babangida, who alleged irregularities.

Gen. Babangida was succeeded by an interim civilian administration, which gave way to General Sani Abacha who seized power last November. Gen. Abacha meanwhile is to make a national address on radio early Sunday, his office said in Abuja.

Mr. Abiola had announced he was going to be sworn in Sunday as president and head of the army to oust what he described as the "illegal" military regime of Gen. Abacha.

But Nigerian newspapers Saturday reported a letter by Mr. Abiola agreeing to delay his declaration of a rival government for a few days, in response to a request by the Anglican Archbishop of Nigeria, Abiodun Adedoye.

Arch. Adedoye was cited as having written to Mr. Abiola saying: "It is our intention to use that Sunday (June 12) for special prayers for the peaceful restoration of democracy to Nigeria."

Mr. Abiola wrote in reply: "As a man who respects the religious belief of our people and based on the unanimous advice of our leaders of NADECO, I confirm to you the postponement of the swearing-in ceremony."



Members of the British Royal Engineers Bomb Disposal Unit, Cpl. Arnie Rutherford (left) and Cpl. Mick Callaghan, serving with British U.N. forces in central Bosnia gently remove a five grenade after being called to investigate mines at a check-point near Vitez (AFP photo)

Bosnia ceasefire signs 'encouraging' despite clashes, UNPROFOR says

SARAJEVO (AFP) — U.N. military officials said Saturday there were "encouraging" signs that the warring factions were trying to observe the latest Bosnian ceasefire, 24 hours after it came into force.

The comments came despite resumed fierce clashes in the northern town of Maglaj Saturday morning, only yards from a U.N. Protection Force base there, in what U.N. officials described as the most intense fighting in several weeks.

"Both sides generally appear to be making an effort to comply with the terms of the cessation of hostilities agreement," said UNPROFOR spokesman Eric Chaperon.

"Major activity between the parties has decreased substantially however some fighting continued, in a certain way we are satisfied, the night was very quiet, which is very encouraging."

"As a first day it is not too bad," he said. "We hope the fighting is not going to resume this morning," he said.

He said however that some fighting had taken place since the truce came into effect at midday (1000 GMT) Friday, notably in the regions of Ribnica, Srebrenik in northern Bosnia, and Bratunac north of Sarajevo.

The latest ceasefire — due to last a month — came into force Friday following an agreement reached in Geneva between U.N. envoy Yasushi Akashi and the warring factions.

The truce is seen by international mediators as a first step towards a durable ceasefire in the two-year-old war allowing peace talks to get under way.

In the most serious reported violation of the ceasefire, fierce fighting resumed near the northern town of

Maglaj, according to UNPROFOR officials based in the area.

British U.N. troops billeted in a former school a few hundred metres from a front-line between Bosnian Muslim and Serb forces said an intense exchange of artillery and small arms fire erupted early Saturday morning.

A contingent spokesman said it was the most violent clash they had witnessed in several weeks. He added that they had detected no drop in the intensity of fighting since the truce came into force.

He said two 40 mm. shells landed not far from U.N. positions adding that the school itself was hit by automatic gunfire from Serb lines. The fighting followed clashes which lasted all Friday afternoon.

The UNPROFOR official said Serb forces were continuing Saturday morning to refuse access to U.N. military observers trying to monitor the ceasefire in Serb-held areas.

He added that talks to this end between U.N. and Bosnian Serb officials were expected to be held during the day Saturday.

The U.N. commander in Bosnia, General Michael Rose, Friday said the U.N. observers had started deploying that day on the Bosnian government side of the front.

Late Friday the U.N. command in Kiseljak, west of Sarajevo predicted that the ceasefire could take up to 48 hours to implement, as it would take that long for the order to filter down to "the last soldier in his trench."

In a related development, representatives of the Bosnian government were due to meet Serb authorities at Sarajevo Airport during the day to discuss prisoner releases agreed under the Geneva accord.

In Belgrade Saturday, the deputy chief of the Bosnian Serb army, General Milan Gvero accused the Bosnian government army of breaching the truce, according to the Bosnian Serb News Agency (SRNA).

He said Muslim forces had carried out "offensives" in the regions of Kupres and Donji Vakuf in southwestern Bosnia, and Vlasice, Maglaj and Ozren in the north.

"Bosnian Serb army units did not react to the Muslim provocations, but if they seek to launch an offensive, we will behave in a military fashion," he added.

In Istanbul, Turkey, NATO and the countries of the former Soviet Bloc expressed full support Friday for current efforts to negotiate an end to the fighting in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Meeting as the North Atlantic Cooperation Council (NACC), they urged all sides to the fighting to negotiate a comprehensive ceasefire and an early and durable settlement to the conflict.

The NACC issued a statement endorsing the efforts of the so-called contact group on Bosnia, which comprises the United States, Russia, the European Union and the United Nations.

The chairman of Friday's meeting, NATO Deputy Secretary-General Silvio Balanzino, said: "There was consensus that we must continue our efforts despite the difficulties and frustration."

But he said negotiations could work only if the ceasefire was respected. Early reports from Bosnia indicated several violations of the U.N.-brokered truce.

The NACC meeting also expressed its "deep concern" about tensions and potential conflict in such areas of ex-Yugoslavia as Vojvodina, Sandjak, Kosovo and parts of Croatia.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Blast rocks Hungarian parliament

BUDAPEST (AFP) — An explosive device went off near a doorway to the Hungarian parliament building early Saturday, shattering nearby windows but causing no injuries, according to police quoted on Hungarian radio. They gave no other details, saying only the device went off around 2:30 a.m. (0430 GMT) near the little-used doorway. The left returned to power in Hungary in late May when the Hungarian Socialist Party (MSZP) won the country's second free elections since the fall of the Communist regime in 1990.

India to keep nuclear option open

NEW DELHI (AP) — India said Saturday it would not give up its option to build nuclear weapons despite Western pressure to open its nuclear facilities to international inspection. "We do not want to give up the option of producing a bomb," said Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao in a speech to officials of the ruling Congress Party.

India exploded a nuclear bomb in 1974, but maintains that its atomic energy programme is mainly for generating electricity and not for building a nuclear arsenal. India has refused to sign the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and open its half-dozen nuclear plants and laboratories to international inspection to ensure that the spent fuel is not diverted for defence purposes. Many Western experts believe that India and Pakistan, both capable of producing nuclear weapons, came close to a nuclear war during border tensions in 1988 and 1990. The United States and other Western nations have tried to pressure India and Pakistan to stop their nuclear weapons programmes. Pakistan refuses to sign the NPT until India does so.

Firebombers target top store in London

LONDON (AFP) — Explosives experts made safe two firebombs found in a department store in London's West End, police said, adding they had not ruled out the possibility the Irish Republican Army planted the devices.

The two bombs in cassette-like holders were found by staff hidden in clothing on sale at Liberty's, Regent Street, which ranks with Harrods and Harvey Nichols as a favourite for West End shoppers. The store and nearby buildings were evacuated and a stretch of Regent's Street sealed off for a short time.

Mafia turncoat surrenders in Italy

ROME (AFP) — A mafia turncoat who played a key role in a probe into the car-bomb killing of anti-mafia Judge Giovanni Falcone has given himself up 24 hours after escaping from a secret detention site, police said Saturday.

Mario Santo Di Matteo, arrested in June 1993 for involvement in the Falcone assassination a year earlier, surrendered to police overnight in the small town of Terni, 100 kilometres north of here. Inspectors from Italy's anti-mafia brigade took him to an undisclosed site and Roman and Sicilian magistrates are to question him Saturday, court officials said.

Mr. Di Matteo, whose revelations enabled police to put together a precise reconstruction of the Falcone murder, vanished late Thursday after the father of another turncoat was found hanged in Mr. Di Matteo's home village in Sicily. Police said they believed Mr. Di Matteo had run away out of fear there might be a mafia revenge attack on him.

Kohl welcomes French invitation

BIELEFELD, Germany (AFP) — German Chancellor Helmut Kohl Saturday welcomed France's invitation to German troops to join the Bastille Day parade next month as a "fantastic thing."

In an interview with the daily Neue Westfaelische Zeitung, Mr. Kohl recalled that the last time German soldiers marched down the Champs Elysees was when they were taken prisoner after the fall of Paris to the allies at the end of World War II. "People spat on them, they were insulted. And 50 years later, there is this invitation from the president of the French Republic, which is proof of France-German friendship," he said. Mr. Kohl complained that "many people here have unfortunately lost their sense

of history." The initiative by French President Francois Mitterrand to invite the German soldiers to join the Bastille Day Parade on July 14 as part of the Franco-German Eurocorps caused controversy in France. On Wednesday, former President Valery Giscard d'Estaing questioned the wisdom of Mr. Mitterrand's decision, during a televised appearance. Tears filled his eyes as he recalled the German occupation of Paris when he was a schoolboy. Prime Minister Edouard Balladur, a conservative, said Friday that he had not been consulted over the decision although he did not disapprove. But he suggested that German members of the resistance should also be invited.

Malaysian king remembers Bosnians

KUALA LUMPUR (AFP) — Malaysia's king appealed Saturday for a more comprehensive political approach to end the suffering of Bosnian Muslims, while urging local Muslims to strictly follow Islamic teachings to ensure peace and prosperity.

Tunku Ja'afar Abdul Rahman, in his message to Muslims in conjunction with the Muslim New Year, Maal Hijrah, said he hoped the Organisation of the Islamic Conference would put on its "top agenda this year" efforts to help bring a quick end to the Bosnian conflict. Predominantly Muslim Malaysia, which has bitterly condemned the Serbian offensive against the Muslims in Bosnia-Herzegovina, recently called for an international conference to find a peaceful solution to the conflict.

At home, Malaysian Muslims should "truly follow the teachings of Islam to ensure a peaceful and prosperous life," the king said. Drug addiction, child abandonment, living out of wedlock and wife and child abuse are becoming rampant but must be checked, he said.

Pakistani party vows retaliation

ISLAMABAD (AFP) — The self-exiled leader of Pakistan's large Urdu-speaking community has threatened strong retaliation after a special court sentenced him to life imprisonment, it was reported here Saturday.

"The operation of the masses would now begin," Altaf Hussain told the Pakistani English-language The News newspaper in a telephone interview from London. Mr. Hussain, head of Mohajir Qaumi Movement (MQM), and 18 other top leaders of the ethnic-based party, most of whom are at large, were convicted by the Special Court for Suppression of Terrorist Activities Thursday. Based in Karachi — capital of the troubled Sind province where most Mohajirs live in the main urban centres — the court found the MQM leaders guilty of involvement in the kidnapping of an army officer about two years ago. Mr. Hussain, who has been living in London for more than two years, was sentenced to 27 years, while the others were sentenced to 30 years in jail each.

In the interview Mr. Hussain slammed what he called "the troika of corrupt army generals, corrupt bureaucracy and feudal and capitalist politicians." "Now I will reveal to the public all the sensational secrets which I have so far kept in my heart... as to how the troika was putting the country's interests at stake to achieve their nefarious goals," Mr. Hussain said.

Blasts cause slight damage in Athens

ATHENS (AP) — Four small explosions damaged parked vehicles and buildings in central Athens late Friday and early Saturday, police said. No one was injured. An anonymous caller told an Athens radio station that the anti-state struggle group claimed responsibility for planting an incendiary device that slightly damaged a private school bus shortly before midnight. Another explosion at about the same time damaged an office block's entrance, followed shortly after by another that caused slight damage to a coffee warehouse.

Two hours later another explosion damaged privately-owned truck and four cars just off fashionable Queen Sophia Avenue. No one claimed responsibility for the three later explosions, a police spokesman said. He said that it was not yet clear what kind of explosive devices had been used. The device planted under the school bus was made up of small camping gas containers, the officer said. He spoke on condition of anonymity, in accordance with Greek practice.

Muslims denounce Philippines massacre, kidnappings

MARAWI, Philippines (AFP) — Some 20,000 Filipino Muslims rallied in this southern city Saturday, denouncing the massacre by Islamic extremists of 15 Christian hostages and other criminal activities, police said.

The rally, attended by Vice President Joseph Estrada and armed forces chief General Arturo Enrile, came as talks with the extremists to free 22 more Christian captives entered a second day on Basilan Island, southwest of here.

Members of the radical Abu Sayyaf group, who rounded up the hostages Wednesday and massacred them hours later, have warned they would kill the remaining captives if the military continued operations against them.

Reports to police headquarters in Manila said security had been tightened on the hostages to prevent a possible rescue. The reports said the captives had been tied up and divided into three groups, guarded by 60 gunmen.

Army officer kills 7 in Sweden

STOCKHOLM (AP) — A 24-year-old army officer armed with an assault rifle killed seven people and seriously wounded another early Saturday in the central Swedish town of Falun, police said. Authorities called it the worst violent crime in modern Swedish history.

Five of those killed were young women who were serving in the voluntary Women's Army Auxiliary Corps, several sources told the Swedish News Agency (TT). Two men who were passing by were also killed.

The gunman shot the victims as they walked through a park in Falun, about 230 kilometres northwest of Stockholm. The women were on their way home from a disco, Swedish Television reported.

"It was an execution," police spokesman Bertil Jansson said.

Two police officers who were called to the scene at 2:30 a.m. (0030 GMT) tried to persuade the gunman to surrender, but he opened fire on them.

In the shootout, the gunman was hit in the hip, but the police officers were uninjured, Mr. Jansson said.

One wounded woman was taken to Falun's hospital, where she was listed in serious condition.

The gunman was taken to the same hospital. His name was not released, but the army issued a statement saying he was a second lieutenant serving at the local army base.

Army spokesman Tage Johansson told TT that all army officers are issued weapons.

A spokesman at the National Swedish Investigation Department — the Swedish equivalent of the FBI in the United States —

said the massacre was the worst violent crime in modern Swedish history.

"When it comes to the number of people dead at the same time, it's the worst," said the spokesman, who asked not to be named.

The identities of the victims had not been released by Saturday afternoon.

Police began questioning the gunman Saturday morning and said he appeared confused, TT reported.

Police had not established a motive, but said there was no direct connection between the gunman and his victims. There was also no indication that he had been drinking, police said.

Falun, which has a population of 50,000, is mainly an industrial town with most people employed in the mining and chemical industries. It is also a winter sports resort.

Japanese emperor begins U.S. tour

ATLANTA, Georgia (AFP) — Japan's Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko Friday laid a wreath on the grave of civil rights leader Martin Luther King Jr. here on the first stop of their 17-day goodwill tour of the United States.

The Japanese royal couple paid homage to the black leader's gravesite at the Martin Luther King Jr. Centre for Non-violent Social Change and spoke to his widow, Coretta Scott King.

Emperor Akihito and Mrs. King talked as they walked around a wading pool surrounding Rev. King's tomb, while Empress Michiko and Rev. King's eldest son, Martin Luther King II, strolled behind them.

The couple bowed respectfully at the tomb of the slain

civil rights leader while some civil rights activists called the visit hypocritical given what they said is Japan's racism toward blacks.

"I found Japan to be the most racist nation in the world," said civil rights activist Hosea Williams, who visited Japan in 1983. "I hope this visit is the beginning of a new relationship between African-Americans and the Japanese."

Japanese politicians stirred the ire of blacks here over insulting remarks and negative advertising images while Japanese firms operating here have been accused of discriminating against blacks and Hispanics.

Atlanta was the first stop of the 11-city tour that is aimed at promoting goodwill and friendship between the two countries. Earlier in the day, the couple had lunch with former President Jimmy Carter.

The royal couple goes on to Charleston, South Carolina where they will meet with town leaders and dine with local Japanese business leaders.

The last visit to the United States by a Japanese monarch was made in 1975 by Emperor Akihito's father Emperor Hirohito, who commanded the Japanese Imperial Army during World War II.

Sampras rallies to avoid upset at Queen's Club tournament

LONDON (AP) — Top seed Pete Sampras saved a match point in the second set and rallied to defeat surprising Swede Jan Apell 3-6, 7-6 (7-5), 6-2 Saturday in the semifinals of the Queen's Club grass-court tournament.

Sampras, frustrated by Apell's return of service in the first two sets, turned the match around with five straight points after going down 2-5 in the second set tiebreaker.

One game earlier, the world No. 1 stayed alive with a service winner on match point.

"I wasn't worried about the match point because it was on my serve," Sampras said. "But then I was 2-5 down in the tiebreaker that followed and I was concerned. It was in his hands to win. I got lucky."

A brilliant forehand passing shot down the line brought Sampras back to 3-5 in the tiebreaker. He then followed with three more winners and his 10th ace of the match.

Apell broke Sampras to start the third set and held

serve to go ahead 2-0, but won only five more points as Sampras reeled off the final six games.

Sampras, enjoying his best run at Queen's, will play the winner of the match between No. 5 seed Todd Martin of the United States and South African qualifier Christo van Rensburg in Sunday's final.

Martin was leading 4-1 in the first set when play was halted by a bomb scare. Police evacuated the grounds while a search was carried out.

Apell, ranked 127th in the world and better known for his doubles play, nearly pulled his third upset of the week by fending off Sampras' serve with sharp return winners and low half-volleys that the American had trouble putting away at the net.

Sampras was also unable to gain even a break point against Apell's strong left-handed serve until the third set.

The American was so unsettled by Apell's game that, after losing a point on a perfect passing shot in the 10th game of the second set, Sampras held up both hands

and bowed in tribute to the 24-year-old Swede, drawing applause from the crowd.

"For a while there he was kicking my butt," Sampras said.

Apell, playing his first major event on the surface, was attempting to add Sampras to his list of impressive scalps this week, which included grass-court specialists Goran Ivanisevic and Mark Woodforde.

"I was surprised to be in a position to beat him," Apell said. "I was mentally tired in the third set. I had never expected to get to match point or get that close and in the end I just couldn't take anymore."

The tournament is often seen as a harbinger for Wimbledon, but Apell won't be making his first singles appearance at the All England Club this year. His world ranking is too low to get a place in the main draw, and rather than go through the qualifying tournament at Roehampton next week, he said he would opt instead for the regular tour event in Manchester.

Spain beat Canada 2-0.

MONTREAL (AFP) — Spain beat Canada 2-0 here Friday in a game which pleased coach Javier Clemente as they fine-tune their World Cup challenge.

Striker Julio Salinas headed Spain into the lead after 10 minutes and five minutes from time Juan Castano, his partner in attack, scored the second goal.

In between the two strikes, Spain were relentless in attack but Canada, who failed to qualify for the USA World Cup finals, were equally dogged in defence.

Canadian keeper Paul Dolan was in brilliant form, saving a powerful drive from Luis Enrique Martinez after 20 minutes.

The Spaniards had seven shots on target, but Doran was equal to all but two.

In Toronto Sunday, Spain continue their warm-up programme with a match against another strong World Cup qualifier, the Netherlands.



Workers inflate a large globe of the world Friday in preparation for the World Cup opening ceremony at Soldier

Field in Chicago. The World Cup will begin in one week at Soldier Field with world-champion Germany facing Bolivia June 17 after the opening ceremony (AFP photo)

Elliot loses legal battle over tackle

LONDON (AP) — Former Chelsea soccer player Paul Elliott lost a high court suit Friday against Welsh international Dean Saunders over a tackle which ended his career.

Justice Manjeev Drake ruled that striker Saunders and his then club Liverpool were not to blame for the knee ligament injury.

Elliott, 30, was considered an almost certain England player of the future and was an integral part of Chelsea's team. He had sought £1 million (\$1.5 million) in damages.

"Naturally I am disappointed," Elliott said after the ruling was announced. "Now I just want a well-earned rest."

Asked if he would appeal, Elliott said, "I wouldn't say it is out of the question."

Saunders, who now plays for Aston Villa, said, "All I can say is that we should never have been here in the first place."

Several leading players gave evidence against Saunders. But Drake said he was impressed with the evidence of the match referee, one of the linesmen and the referee's assessor, who all

thought Elliott was guilty of dangerous play and that Saunders made a legitimate challenge.

"My strong impression was that he was telling the truth when he said his intent was only on going for the ball and it was instinct which, at the last minute, made him take both feet off the ground in an attempt to avoid probably serious injury to himself," the judge said.

Saunders' attorney, John Smith, said outside the court: "If this action had succeeded, the game may not have been the same in the future. All players would be worried about making a challenge for the ball in case it resulted in injury to their opponent and that they would be sued as a result."

Elliott claimed Saunders cost him two of the most vital years of his career as he was on the verge of making the England team, and effected his future prospects as a coach.

He now faces legal costs unofficially estimated at \$500,000 (\$750,000).

The judge offered his sympathy to Elliott, whom he described as a "rising star."

Vietnam soccer scoop goes beyond the grave

HANOI (AFP) — Vietnam's enthusiasm about the World Cup, to be broadcast live here for the first time, has reached such a fever pitch that one newspaper has pushed its search for a scoop into a new realm. Lev Yashin, the Russian goalkeeper renowned as one of the greatest ever, gave his appraisal of the 24 goalkeepers in the teams for the World Cup finals in a special World Cup edition put out by the Youth Publishing House.

Yashin also told an interviewer from the "Sports in Russia" magazine from where the Vietnamese publication took its article that he would be travelling to the United States during the month-long finals to attend the presentation of a football award bearing his name.

"Everybody considers me a good example. Therefore I should live the rest of my life in a deserving way," Yashin said of his ambitions for the future.

Sadly for the footballing world, and for the newspaper, Yashin died in March 1990, three months before the last World Cup in Italy.

School exams, spending checks keep Saudi soccer fans away from World Cup

RIYADH (AP) — Soccer-crazy Saudis are not rushing to buy tickets for the World Cup soccer games in the United States even though their national team is playing in the finals for the first time, tour operators reported Saturday.

Travel agency executives blamed this on the timing of the games, which kick off June 17. That coincides with the annual school and university examinations.

"The games are one month too early," said Zainal Ali Reza, director of the Jeddah-based Ali Reza Travels, one of the two Saudi tour operators authorised to sell World Cup tickets.

A senior education ministry official scotched speculation that the examinations would be postponed to accommodate soccer fans.

"The final examinations will start on schedule on June 25," Abdullatif Al Zeid, director-general of education in the Red Sea port city of Jeddah, was quoted as saying by newspapers.

Travel industry executives

said a tight check on spending by the government could be another reason why Saudis are not travelling abroad as much.

A diplomat at the U.S. embassy also noted that fewer Saudis than expected have applied for U.S. visas.

The number of Saudi applications being processed this month is the same as last year — 300 a day.

"There's been no giant increase," he said, declining to be named under embassy rules.

The other operator, Riyadh-based Al Tayer Travel Group, is writing off losses after spending heavily on advertising World Cup trips in Saudi newspapers.

Officials said it has sold only 200 tickets, a fraction of the expected demand, and does not expect any last-minute rush.

Ali Reza plans to market its unsold stock in the United States, but is pinning its hopes on the final rounds in San Francisco and Los Angeles generating some interest.



Nigel Mansell

Mansell stays mum on F1

DETROIT, Michigan (AFP) — England's Nigel Mansell, third in early qualifying for the Detroit Indy-car Grand Prix, remained silent Friday about negotiations to lure him back into Formula One racing.

Williams race team officials have said they want Mansell back. U.S. reports have said Carl Haas, co-owner of Mansell's Indy-car ride, will not stand in Mansell's way of driving in six F1 races that do not conflict with Indy-car events.

"Nigel is fully committed to driving in all 16 Indy-car races this year," Newman-Haas team spokesman Michael Knight said. "The guy is fully committed to attempting to defend the Indy-car series championship he won last year."

Knight did not address any possible part-season F1 bid by Mansell, who has struggled this season. Mansell's best finish this season was second at Long Beach. A low-speed blow from behind by a less-experienced racer took him out of Indianapolis 500 contention, a fate Mansell said still bothers him.

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Knicks beat Rockets to even NBA series

HOUSTON (R) — The New York Knicks, using a balanced offense and stiff fourth-quarter defense, closed the game with a 15-4 run to beat the Houston Rockets 91-83 Friday and earn a 1-1 split on the road in the NBA finals.

"The playoffs don't get interesting until the home team loses. But we cannot get light-headed," said New York coach Pat Riley.

"I thought their defence was the deciding factor in the game tonight," Houston coach Rudy Tomjanovich said.

The New York starting guards redeemed themselves after woeful shooting in the first half.

John Starks scored 19 points on 6-for-11 shooting, 3-of-4 from 3-point distance. Derek Harper was 7-for-11 for 18 points, 4-of-6 from long range. Starks and Harper had three steals apiece.

Centre Patrick Ewing added 16 points along with a game-high 13 rebounds, six blocked shots, two assists and two steals.

"I thought we accelerated our game. I didn't score but I did everything else, rebounding the ball, blocking shots, making passes," said Ewing.

The best-of-seven series now moves to New York for games three through five.

"You want to come in here and get both games, but we'll settle for a split," said Starks, who had shot just 3-for-18 in game one.

NBA most valuable player Hakeem Olajuwon, guarded at times by Ewing, Anthony Mason, Charles Smith or Charles Oakley, led Houston with 25 points. Vernon Maxwell, who also shot badly in game one, improved to 8-of-17 for 20 points. Robert Horry was next high with 11 points.

Otis Thorpe led the Rockets with 12 rebounds.

After starting the fourth quarter down 72-65, the Rockets used an 11-4 run to draw even, then took their first and only lead of the second half at 79-76 with 6 1/2 minutes to go in the fourth quarter. Vernon Maxwell converted a breakaway and foul shot off a long pass from Thorpe.

"We made a run and even got the lead but Harper made some big, big shots," said Tomjanovich.

Harper hit a 3-pointer to put the Knicks up for good as the Knicks scored eight straight points to go up 84-79, and after an Olajuwon basket, Harper hit another three to key a five point run that made it 87-81. Two free throws by each team produced the final score.

"You've got to give them a lot of credit. They played a great defensive game on the road. Their guards made some big shots," said Tomjanovich.



Croatian forward of FC Porto Ljubo Djurkovic (centre) struggles with Sporting's Paulo Sousa (right) during the Portuguese final Cup Winners Cup soccer match Friday in Lisbon. FC Porto beat Sporting 2-1 and will go to European Cup Soccer match next season (AFP photo)

Plans for Capriati lawsuit dropped

MIAMI (AP) — Jennifer Capriati checked out of a substance abuse clinic Friday, accompanied by her mother and apparently uncertain about her future.

Capriati spent 33 days at Mount Sinai Medical Centre following her arrest May 16 for marijuana possession.

Capriati's father, Stefano, recently said she would be released from the hospital next Thursday. Her agent Barbara Perry said she did not know whether Capriati left the treatment programme earlier than planned.

"I'd prefer not to speculate on that," Perry said. "I really don't know."

The hospital declined to say whether Capriati completed her programme before departing. The 18-year-old tennis star left the Miami Beach hospital at mid-morning and climbed into a black Volvo.

Her father recently told the Italian sports daily La Gazzetta dello Sport that she would rejoin the family and leave Florida forever, perhaps moving to Italy. Her father is in Milan with her 14-year-old brother, Steven, who is to play in a junior tournament there next week.

An expert on the treatment of substance abuse said three weeks is a standard duration for inpatient care. The next phase typically involves outpatient counselling, often with group therapy one to three times a week.

"In the transitional phase, the person is beginning to learn how to function in the real world again," said Roberto Malow, director of



Jennifer Capriati

research and education at the University of Miami's Addiction and Research Treatment Centre.

"This is a chronic relapsing disorder," Malow said. "People tend to fall down several times before they lick this problem."

According to published reports, Capriati spent more than a week in drug rehabilitation in February. Acquaintances allege that Capriati used crack cocaine and heroin during a weekend party before her arrest at a Coral Gables motel.

"The more messy and chaotic your life is, the more likely you will relapse," Malow said. "A lot of the outcome is dependent not just on the individual but on going back to an environment that supports recovery."

Capriati, who turned 19 just before her 14th birthday, left the WTA tour last year after losing in the first round of the U.S. Open. Her father said she will return to tennis, but there has been no indication when.

Skah underlines ambitions with 5,000m win

SAINT-DENIS, France (R) — Moroccan Khalid Skah underlined his ambitions by beating world record holder Haile Gebresilasie of Ethiopia over 5,000 metres at the Saint-Denis athletics meeting Friday.

Skah, aiming at Gebresilasie's record of 12:56.96 set six days ago, outspurred the Ethiopian to clock the third fastest time of the year in 13:10.51 on a cool and windy night.

"The race was okay but I didn't feel too well because I've been sick," said Skah, the Olympic champion over 10,000 metres.

"Gebresilasie was lucky when he broke the record because the conditions were ideal," he added. "I want the record and I know I can have it."

Gebresilasie was the first to attack with 600 metres to go but Skah resisted before making his move 200 metres from the finish.

Former world 400 metres hurdles champion Samuel Matete of Zambia, who clocked the fastest time of the season in 48.11 seconds in Rome Wednesday, confirmed he was on form by winning his race easily in 48.82.

Olympic champion Deratu Tulu of Ethiopia was equally impressive in the women's 10,000 metres beating compatriot Merima Denbora.

WOMEN'S WORLD BASKETBALL CHAMPIONSHIPS

Brazil eliminate U.S., to meet China in final

SYDNEY (AFP) — Brazil produced the upset of the women's world basketball championships here Saturday, eliminating the United States and ending their unbeaten 21-game record stemming back 11 years.

The Brazilians sent their fans dancing to the samba beat in the stands with their 110-107 win which set up a Sunday final with China, 66-65 winners earlier over host nation Australia in the first semi-final.

The United States, winners of the last two world championships, play off for the bronze medal against Australia.

It was the South American champions' third win over the United States in a world championship following prior successes, 56-44 in 1967 and 29-23 in 1953.

It was the remarkable Hortencia Oliva, the 34-year-old forward with regal status in Brazil, who showed the way, scooping a game-high 32 points.

Her celebrated teammate, guard Paula da Silva, chipped in with 29 points with the athletic Janeth Arcain contributing 22 points.

Brazil, who were last-gasp winners over Spain to qualify for Saturday's semi, shot 61 per cent from the free-throw line.

The Americans, whose field goal percentage was

down around 45 per cent with 82 per cent free throws, out-muscled the Brazilians in the rebounds, 39-29.

The South Americans led 57-54 at half-time and only relinquished the lead briefly in the second period when Ruthie Bolton-Holfield sank a basket for a 92-91 lead with 4:24 left.

"This was our most important win as it gave us the credibility to go into our first world championship final," said coach Miguel Angelo da Luz.

The win was a triumph for Miguel and his coaching staff preparing his team to face the Americans after coming off an emotional high in beating Spain inside the final 50 seconds on Thursday.

"We were up until three in the morning analysing all the offensive and defensive schemes," he said.

Tactical discipline was the key factor and we never once believe that we could not beat the United States and we didn't let them open up the game."

If the stadium reaction to the win is any guide, there should be widespread rejoicing in Brazil over the win over the defending champions.

"I'm sure this win will be received with a lot of happiness in Brazil, but I hope the

happiness is greater if we go back with the title," said Miguel.

American coach Tara Van Derveer paid tribute to the Brazilian performance, saying: "They played very well within themselves, they didn't try to do things that weren't there."

"I think Brazil with their offensive weapons are always difficult, they had great outside shooting, they went by us."

"We had people on our team not playing to their potential and that's very disappointing, they know who they are."

Katrina McClain played for all but two minutes and finished with 29 points and an impressive total of 19 rebounds.

Earlier, domineering Chinese centre Zheng Haixia ended Australia's desperate attempt to reach the final before their own fans with a devastating solo display.

Haixia broke free the defensive shackles to spearhead China into the final with a game-high 36 points in a gripping 66-65 win over the Australian.

It was a brave performance from Australia, who made a dramatic turnaround from a 20-point mauling in last week's preliminary rounds in Adelaide where China stroled to an 87-67 victory.

NEWS IN BRIEF

U.S. approves Nigerian flights

WASHINGTON (AFP) — Nigeria Airways planes carrying the nation's World Cup team and its supporters will be allowed to fly to the United States after security checks in Senegal, U.S. officials said Friday. The conditional approval granted by the U.S. Department of Transportation, which had objected to flights from Nigeria because of what it termed a lack of effective security measures at the Lagos airport. Paul Gretch, director of the Office of International Aviation said all Nigerian World Cup flights must stop at Dakar, Senegal, where all passengers and baggage will be off-loaded and screened by security officers, which will conduct a search of the aircraft. No cargo or passengers may be carried on flights returning from U.S. airports to Senegal after delegations have arrived, nor from Senegal to the United States in coming back to pick up the Nigerian group, Gretch said. No flights between U.S. cities were permitted in the conditions.

Clinton to attend World Cup match

WASHINGTON (AFP) — President Bill Clinton has accepted an invitation to attend a World Cup soccer match June 17 in Chicago, the White House said Friday. Clinton will attend the opening game at Soldier Field in Chicago, the White House said. Vice-President Al Gore was also expected to attend the championship game at the Rose Bowl in Pasadena, California July 17, according to press reports.

Laudrup signing delayed

GLASGOW, Scotland (AP) — Rangers' £3-million (\$4.5 million) signing of Danish international Brian Laudrup has been delayed. Laudrup was due to fly to Glasgow Friday to sign his contract, but a problem over payments between his club Fiorentina and AC Milan, to whom he was loaned last season, has put the signing back. Official confirmation of the deal may have to wait until early next week.

Karolyi, Zmeskal end retirement

WORCESTER, Massachusetts (AFP) — Former world gymnastics champion Kim Zmeskal, retired since the 1992 Olympics, has rediscovered her love for the sport and lured coach Bela Karolyi back with her. Zmeskal, who performed an exhibition here Friday, plans to challenge for a place on the 1996 U.S. Olympic squad with once-retired Karolyi guiding her. "We're here to add a little spice to gymnastics,"

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"My dear Hastings, more often than not things that seem too easy really are just that. However, that does not mean that we should forget about the little gray cells and do things automatically."
Hercule Poirot, the famous Belgian detective, was relaxing after an evening of duplicate at the club. He and his friend, Capt. Hastings, had come in first, thanks in large part to the above hand, which occasioned the comments.
"You see, once you could do no

more than make a simple raise in hearts I gave up all thoughts of a grand slam and simply bid what I felt we could make. I must admit that, after the king of diamonds lead, I was a little taken aback to find our contract was not laid down."
"Obviously, if the queen of hearts came down, all would be well, but when the lady failed to appear in two rounds, my work was cut out. I would have to discard two losing diamonds before letting the opponents ruff in."
"The obvious way was to tackle spades first and the other declarer, who tried that method failed when the third spade was ruffed and the defenders cashed a diamond. But no, the great Poirot was not taken in by the quick pitch."
"A little thought showed that, for the contract to succeed, three rounds of clubs would have to go through, so I first cashed the ace and king of clubs. When East, who had discarded on the second heart, also showed out on the second club, all was well. I finessed the ten of clubs, discarded a diamond or, the queen of clubs and only then started on spades. When West ruffed the third spade, I had already discarded my last diamond. Logic, my dear Hastings, logic..."

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	Tom Cruise & Holly Hunter in The Firm Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 9:00		CLASS 1999 '2' Shows: 12:30, 3:15, 5:00, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30		CONCORD '1' LOVER BOY CONCORD '2' THE GETAWAY Shows: 12:30, 3:45, 6:00, 8:15, 10:15		Soon the new play!!!	Today & Everyday Abu Awwad in social comedy "PUNCTURED BAG"	is back to you after performing in Canada as of Wednesday, June 15, 1994 in their play: "What a peace!" Performances start at 8:30 p.m.

NEWS IN BRIEF**Turkey to expel 16 Iran rebels to Iraq**

ANKARA (AFP) — Turkish authorities are expelling 16 members of Iran's main armed opposition group arrested in a police raid here, Anatolia news agency reported Saturday. They confessed they had entered Turkey from Iraq with false passports and had received military training at a camp in Iraq, it said. The Mujahideen-e-Khalq, Iran's main armed opposition group, is based in Baghdad. The Turkish Interior Ministry rejected their request for political asylum and drove them to Silopi, on the border with Iraq, where they will be expelled, the news agency said. The action is a good-will gesture to Iran, senior police officials told Anatolia. Turkey, which also shares a border with Iran, forbids groups opposed to its neighbours and expects Iran to do the same to the Kurdish Labour Party, which has mounted an armed rebellion against Ankara since 1994, he said.

2 civilians, 11 rebels killed in Turkey

ANKARA (R) — Troops killed 11 rebel Kurds in separate clashes in east and southeast Turkey and Kurdish guerrillas killed two civilians, officials said on Saturday. The regional emergency rule governor's office said security forces had killed 11 Kurdish Labour Party (PKK) guerrillas in overnight clashes in the provinces of Sirnak, Bingol, Batman, Elazig and Diyarbakir. Anatolia news agency said PKK guerrillas had shot dead two sons of a village headman in Kars province on Friday night. Nearly 12,000 people have been killed since the PKK launched its fight for a separate state in the southeast in 1984.

4 injured in blast on Istanbul ferry

ANKARA (AFP) — Four people were injured Saturday when an explosion shook a passenger ferry running between the European and Asian sides of Istanbul, the Turkish news agency Anatolia said. The blast occurred as passengers were leaving the ferry, the Eminonu, on the city's European bank across the Bosphorus Strait. The four were hospitalised, though the report did not give their condition. There were no immediate claims for the blast. Police did not specify its origin but launched a vast search in the nearby district, the report said. Authorities have generally attributed such attacks to the Kurdish Labour Party, the main Kurdish separatist party fighting central power in Ankara since 1984.

Cyprus president to visit Israel

NICOSIA (AFP) — President Glafkos Clerides is to travel to Israel next month for a first visit by a Cypriot head of state, the government spokesman said. Yiannakis Cassoulides said it would be an unofficial visit and take place in July, but gave no details. Israel's ambassador, Shemi Tzur, has told reporters Mr. Clerides would be in his country from July 11 to 13 and that Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres would soon visit the island. Cyprus, a traditional ally of the Palestinians, has decided to step up ties and open an embassy in Tel Aviv, following the launch of self-rule in Gaza and Jericho.

Iranian foreign minister to visit Germany

NICOSIA (R) — Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati will leave for Germany next Monday for a two-day visit, the Iranian news agency IRNA quoted a Foreign Ministry spokesman as saying. "While in Bonn, Velayati is to discuss expansion of bilateral ties as well as Iran's relations with the European Union (EU)," IRNA said.

Militants try to kidnap German historian

BAALBEK (AFP) — Two members of the Iranian-backed Hizbollah tried to kidnap a German woman historian in the Bekaa Valley on Saturday, the woman and witnesses said. "It was a bad 10 minutes," Neptia Amgret, 45, a historian from Berlin's museum of ethnography, told AFP. She was on her way from her hotel in Baalbek to the famous Roman ruins of this ancient Bekaa Valley town when two young men approached her and said: "Hizbollah, follow us." The two were "very young, one was around 16 and the other 18," Ms. Amgret said. "I refused to follow them so one of the youths grabbed my arm and tried to drag me away. Passersby intervened and escorted me back to the Palmira (hotel) but one of the guys followed me there," she said. She said the other young man drove away in a car but quickly returned to the hotel to get his friend. Hotel staff and witnesses confirmed the kidnapping attempt. Ms. Amgret has been staying at the Palmira Hotel for a week to carry out research at the Roman temples of Baalbek.

Tehran daily urges diplomatic ties with U.S.

TEHRAN (AFP) — An Islamic daily called here Saturday for Iran to resume diplomatic ties with the United States, saying it could no longer live in a political "vacuum." Iran "does not live in a vacuum and can not be indifferent to the outside realities," Jahan-e-Islam warned. "We will eventually be forced to go against the taboo and adopt courageous decisions with respect to America." The paper called for a "firm stand" in seeking ties with the United States and abandoning the anti-U.S. slogans common since the 1979 Islamic revolution which toppled the pro-American Shah. Tehran and Washington broke diplomatic ties in 1980 after Iranian students stormed the U.S. embassy here and took its staff hostage. Iranian leaders have since referred to the United States as the "great Satan" and rejected any negotiations towards normalising ties. However, the United States has in the past two years become Iran's main trading partner, and a lively debate has sprung up between various factions for more than a year over whether to open talks with Washington.

Mayor held for corruption in China

BEIJING (AFP) — Chinese authorities have arrested the mayor of the northeastern city of Dandong for aiding car smugglers, the China Daily said Saturday as officials pledged to root out corruption at all levels. Liasoning provincial government dismissed Chag Yi from his post for giving his backing to smugglers who brought 277 motor vehicles into the city between April 17 and May 8, 1993, the report said. The provincial committee had also decided to expel Mr. Chang from the Communist Party, it quoted the party's Central Discipline Inspection Commission and the Ministry of Supervision as saying Friday. More than 15,000 party and government officials were disciplined for corruption in the first quarter of 1994, the China Daily said.

China slams Patten adviser

HONG KONG (R) — A senior Chinese official Saturday blasted a top adviser to Hong Kong Governor Chris Patten for saying it would be better if China's paramount leader Deng Xiaoping died before the colony returns to China, rather than in the middle of the handover. Zhang Jiansheng, a deputy director of Xinhua News Agency's Hong Kong branch, China's de facto consulate here, described on vapid and frivolous remarks by Edward Chen, a member of Mr. Patten's top policy advisory body, the Executive Council. "How can a man in his position make such frivolous and senseless remarks against a 90-year-old, well-respected figure both in China and Hong Kong? It's simply vapid," Mr. Zhang said. Mr. Deng has relinquished all official posts but continues to hold the ultimate reins of power in China. Mr. Chen tried to calm the storm blown up by his remarks, saying the best possibility was for the 89-year-old Deng to live for "many, many years" after the 1997 handover.

Israel sends 'stern warning' to Lebanon

BEIRUT (Agencies) — The United States was reported Saturday to have conveyed an Israeli threat to obliterate resistance bases in the event of cross-border raids or attacks on Israeli targets abroad.

The London-based newspaper Al Hayat said the Israeli warning was relayed to the Lebanese government by U.S. Ambassador Mark Hambley earlier in the week.

There was no immediate comment from the government or the U.S. embassy on the report, attributed to official sources in Beirut.

Mr. Hambley, in public statements after meeting government leaders last week, urged restraint after Israeli forces dealt two major blows to Hizbollah (Party of God) in the last month.

Hizbollah has threatened to stage suicide bombings similar to that which targeted the Israeli embassy in Buenos Aires, Argentina, March 17, 1992.

Eleven people were killed and 252 wounded in the attack, which was claimed by Hizbollah as a revenge for the assassination of its leader, Sheikh Abbas Musawi, his wife and five-year-old son in an Israeli helicopter ambush in South Lebanon a month earlier.

"No Hizbollah base in Lebanon will survive," the Israeli warning stated, according to Al Hayat, which publishes in Arabic simultaneously in Beirut and London.

The conservative daily said Israel also held the Lebanese government, which backs the guerrillas, responsible for the consequences of any Hizbollah attack on Israel or Israeli targets anywhere in the world.

Hizbollah's bombing threats were made after a June 2 Israeli air strike against a training camp in eastern Lebanon, which left up to 50 people dead.

Washington has publicly urged the Beirut government to rein in Hizbollah in order to create a better climate for peace negotiations with Israel. But Lebanon refused, saying it would not act as a policeman for Israel.

Muslim fundamentalists also were outraged by a May 21 helicopter-borne Israeli

commando foray in eastern Lebanon that netted guerrilla leader Mustafa Dirani. He was snatched out of bed and taken to Israel for interrogation about missing Israeli airman Ron Arad.

Hizbollah has retaliated for the June 2 air raid by firing scores of rockets into northern Israel, heightening tensions on the only active war front of the Arab-Israeli conflict.

The missile strikes last week broke a year-old understanding between Hizbollah and Israel to keep the conflict confined to an Israeli-occupied border strip in south Lebanon.

Hizbollah is planning a major anti-Israeli operation to avenge those killed in the June 2 Israeli air raid, one of its leaders warned Saturday.

"We are preparing an operation that will surprise the world," Hajj Hassan Habiballah told AFP.

Mr. Habiballah said he expected further Israeli military operations and assassination of Hizbollah leaders as part of a U.S. campaign to crush opposition to Arab-Israeli peace talks.

"We're passing through a very dangerous phase."

There is an American plot aimed at liquidating all those who oppose the Middle East peace process and Israel has been charged with carrying it out, Mr. Habiballah said.

But Hizbollah leaders had taken strict measures to preempt any attack. "Senior leaders have moved out of their homes, changed cars and their daily routine," he said.

Syria accused Israel on Saturday of trying to wreck coordination among Arabs involved in peace talks with it and of trying to strike separate deals.

It said recent Israeli attacks against Hizbollah were aimed at forcing Beirut to sign a separate peace with the Jewish state. It said the attempt would fail.

"Syria and Lebanon have a joint will and one stand and will never accept anything less than full withdrawal and a comprehensive peace settlement based on U.S. resolutions 242, 338 and 425," the government daily Tishreen said.

Cyprus president threatens to resign

NICOSIA (Agencies) — Cyprus President Glafkos Clerides has warned he would resign and call new elections if the U.N. Security Council called for more international negotiations on a package of confidence-building measures.

A Cypriot official, declining to be named, told AFP that Mr. Clerides issued the warning in letters to U.S. President Bill Clinton and British Prime Minister John Major, whose countries have voiced support for further talks.

Mr. Clerides, a Greek-Cypriot, threatened to resign and call new presidential elections in late October.

The United Nations last week accused the Turkish-Cypriot side of intransigence blaming it for the lack of progress on a package of confidence-building measures (CBMs) for the divided island, after months of tough negotiations.

But the leader of the Turkish-Cypriots Rauf Denktaş accused Mr. Clerides of "blackmail" in an attempt to stop a new report.

Mr. Denktaş said Mr.

Clerides' aim was "not to accept" the CBMs but "to seize" the deserted southern resort of Varosha currently under Turkish-Cypriot control, the Turkish Cypriot agency TAK said in a report received in Ankara.

A U.N. official said a clarification of the report was due to be published in the coming days and would take into account "positive developments" communicated by Mr. Denktaş before the report was published.

Under the measures ahead of a final settlement, the Turks would hand over Varosha to the United Nations for resettlement by its Greek-Cypriot residents and Nicosia airport would reopen after a closure of 20 years.

Turkish troops invaded the northern third of the island in 1974, following a coup in Nicosia against the former president, the late Archbishop Makarios, backed by the military junta then ruling Greece.

Nine years later, the Turkish-Cypriots declared a breakaway state which has failed to gain international recognition.

Friends urge Nasrin's arrest order lifted; killing reward offered

DHAKA (R) — Friends of Bangladeshi feminist writer Taslima Nasrin, in hiding since last week, urged the government to rescind an order for her arrest as an Islamic leader announced a reward for her death.

"By keeping the arrest order against Nasrin in force the government has clearly demonstrated its alliance with fundamentalist forces," some 25 writers, playwrights, artists and journalists said in a statement on Saturday.

Ms. Nasrin, a physician-turned-writer in her early 30s, provoked Muslim hatred after she had allegedly told Calcutta's Statesman newspaper that the Holy Koran should be "revised thoroughly."

ber arrest after the Bangladesh Times reprinted the Statesman article last Saturday, triggering an angry reaction from local Islamic fundamentalist groups.

In their statement, her 25 friends said she had already denied committing the alleged offence.

"This (her arrest order) amounts to violation of (Nasrin's) human rights and more so as the government has failed to take action against people threatening to kill her," they added.

"We condemn (the government) for giving in to pressure from fundamentalists..." Police on Saturday stepped up the hunt for Ms. Nasrin after Muslim religious leader Mufti Nazrul Islam said he would offer 100,000 taka (\$2,500) to anyone who kills



KING MEETS ENVOY: His Majesty King Hussein on Saturday meets with Yemeni Justice Minister Ahmad Ghanem, who delivered a message from President Ali Abdullah Saleh (see page one) (Petra photo)

Prisoners riot and hold hostage in African jail

JOHANNESBURG (R) — Hundreds of South African prisoners rioted and held the head of their jail hostage on Saturday, one day after the government in reaction to earlier riots said it would cut jail terms for common-law criminals.

Correctional services spokesman Rudie Potgieter said about 200 inmates at St. Albans complex ... the head of the medium A prison is being held by awaiting-trial prisoners," he said. "He is apparently still unharmed."

Mr. Potgieter said that at a prison in the eastern Transvaal town of Witbank, more than 300 inmates were refusing to go back to their cells. They were "moving freely in their section."

The government said on Friday it would cut jail terms by six months for common-law prisoners after riots in several prisons in which at least three people were killed.

The authorities on Saturday said 104 convicts, including rapists and murderers, escaped from one prison during the rampage on Thursday and Friday.

Correctional services spokesman Brigadier Chris Ockers said the man being

held was the head of the medium security prison.

"The man is a major, who is head of one of the prisons. There are four prisons in the St. Albans complex ... the head of the medium A prison is being held by awaiting-trial prisoners," he said. "He is apparently still unharmed."

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held was the head of the medium security prison.

Euro-polls challenge governments

BRUSSELS (Agencies) — Governments around Europe face a test of their popularity Sunday as voters from 12 nations decide who will represent them in the European Union's (EU) legislature.

Voters are expected to use the European Parliament election to register dissatisfaction with national leaders, rather than focus on the role of the 567-seat EU assembly.

Eight nations vote Sunday. Britain, Ireland, Denmark and the Netherlands voted Thursday, but their ballots will not be counted until polls close in the remaining countries.

German Chancellor Helmut Kohl, Spanish Prime Minister Felipe Gonzalez and British Premier John Major will be under most pressure if their parties fare badly.

Mr. Major could be confronted with a challenge to his leadership of the ruling Conservative Party if Sunday's vote count produces another defeat for the Tories after recent losses in local elections.

Mr. Gonzalez has been in power since 1982, but his Socialist government is beset by popular discontent over high unemployment and financial scandals.

He has pledged to resist calls for an early general election if the Socialists do badly Sunday, but the government

could be challenged by a vote of confidence in the national parliament.

Germany's Kohl, in power for 12 years, faces a general election in October. The European Parliament vote should be an indication of how his centre-right coalition government will fare.

Also voting Sunday are Belgium, France, Greece, Italy, Luxembourg and Portugal. In Austria meanwhile, voters face a referendum to decide whether they want to join the EU. Sweden, Norway and Finland hold similar referenda later this year.

The European Parliament is a largely advisory assembly which holds monthly sessions in Strasbourg, France. Last year's Maastricht Treaty, which tightened links between the EU nations, also strengthened the role of the union's only directly elected body.

The parliament can amend legislation, has control over the EU's \$77 billion annual budget, can block EU agreements with outside nations and can veto appointments to the union's powerful Executive Commission.

However, the parliament is often considered remote and ineffective by citizens who may show their lack of interest by staying away from the polls.

Only about a third of Dutch voters showed up at

Thursday's poll. Turnout in Britain and Ireland also was thin.

In Germany, voter participation is expected to be high because local elections are also taking place in a third of the country.

Mr. Kohl's Christian Democrats and the Social Democrats are seen running neck-and-neck around the country. But Eastern Germans, voting for the first time in Euro-elections, could rock the boat.

The party of Democratic Socialism, the reconstructed communists, could gain support from easterners disillusioned with economic hardships almost five years after the fall of the Berlin Wall.

French polls indicate voters view the race primarily as a rehearsal for next year's contest to replace Francois Mitterrand as president.

Former Prime Minister Michel Rocard is leading a Socialist party Euro-campaign against the centre-right government. A good result would boost his hopes of running for the presidency.

Attention in France will also focus on the chances of a new "Other Europe" party that opposes an expansion of EU powers. Similar groups have emerged in other EU nations, but are a novelty in traditionally pro-European France.

COLUMN**Iranian women warned against smiling at men**

TEHRAN (AFP) — Iranian police have warned women not to smile at strange men or to behave in any other way that may arouse "satanic lust," Jomhuri Islami newspaper reported Saturday. A police statement also urged "women and young girls" to cover up fully when "standing at a window overlooking" a neighbour's house. "Exposure without the Islamic cover could invite dirty stares from strange men and arouse satanic lust," it said. "Inappropriate smiles or loose behaviour could also expose them to corruption." Iran has been ruled by Sharia, or Islamic law, since the 1979 revolution which toppled the shah. Under a strict dress code, women must wear the black chador or long raincoats and scarves to conceal their bodies. Authorities have declared a week-long campaign against "social immodesty and corruption" starting Saturday, the first day of the mourning month of Moharram for the death of Imam Hussein. In June 1993, the authorities launched a major crackdown and arrested hundreds of women accused of violating the dress code.

Polish deputies vote to ease anti-abortion law

WARSAW (AFP) — The Polish parliament voted Friday to ease a law banning abortion, legalising the termination of pregnancy in cases of "serious material or personal difficulties." Deputies in the lower house voted by 241 to 107, with 32 abstentions, to liberalise the strictest anti-abortion legislation introduced in January 1993 by Poland's post-Communist government. President Lech Walesa has said he would refuse to sign into law any proposal to legalise abortion. To become law, the parliamentary text must also be approved by the Senate and signed by the president. A presidential veto can be overridden by a two-thirds majority in the lower house. Under present legislation, dictated largely by Poland's powerful Catholic lobby, abortion is banned almost totally except in cases where the life of the mother is endangered, where the pregnancy is the result of rape or incest, or where the embryo has suffered "serious irreversible damage." A Polish government dominated by ex-Communists was formed following legislative elections last September.

Guatemala's Indians celebrate Mayan new year

CERRO POP BIL, Guatemala (AP) — A Mayan Indian group in Guatemala has embarked on a new year, calling upon ancient customs to celebrate the event as in ages past. To the haunting strains of a flute and the slow cadence of a goat skin drum, some 300 Mayans knelt in silence Friday, bowing to the four cardinal points to mark the death and rebirth of their 260-day cycle. "We are trying to rescue the purity of our traditions," said Enrique Aguilar, a member of the National Mayan Coordination, which seeks to strengthen cultural values. "We are here today to recuperate one of our ceremonial centres," said participant Maria Morales. The Mayan heritage extends from the Yucatan peninsula in southeastern Mexico with the ceremonial sites of Uxmal and Chichen Itza, through Guatemala's jungle and highlands, to the western mountains of Honduras. About 80 per cent of Guatemala's population is Mayan. Most live in isolated rural areas, working as farmers and seasonal workers on coffee, sugar or cotton plantations. Dr. Flavio Rojas Lima, a leading Guatemalan anthropologist, said the Mayan culture was in decline. "But that must be considered in relative terms because the people are alive," he said.